

Spring 2012

Direction of the Play: Dead Man Walking

Patrick Williams

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Direction of the Play: *Dead Man Walking*

A Project Report
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
Theatre Production

by
Patrick Williams
June 2012

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Graduate Studies

We hereby approve the project report of

Patrick Williams

Candidate for the degree of Master of Arts:

Theatre Production

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

07/28/12

Date of
Signature

Assistant Professor Elise Forier-Edie
Committee Chair

Date of
Signature

Professor Brenda Hubbard

Date of
Signature

Department Chair Scott R. Robinson

Please note:

This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.

ABSTRACT

PROJECT REPORT

Dead Man Walking

VENUE NAME

Mater Dei High School

Directed by

Patrick Williams

November 2011

This project entailed the selection, background research and documentation, producing, set and house design, casting, direction, collaboration, and post-production analysis of Mater Dei High School's production of Tim Robbin's play *Dead Man Walking*, and *The Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project*. Documentation includes the scheduling, research and analysis of the play as a vehicle for the *Project: Discourse* event for the Performing Arts Department of Mater Dei High School. The analysis also includes a discussion as to the candidate's directorial vision and execution of this production.

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Graduate Studies

Final Examination of

Patrick Williams

BFA Emporia State University 1997

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Theatre Production

Committee in Charge

Assistant Professor Elise Forier-Edie

Professor Brenda Hubbard

Department Chair Scot R. Robinson

McConnell Hall

Room 119

July 25 2012

7:00 PM

Patrick Williams

Courses presented for the Master's degree

Course No.	Course Title	Number of Credits	Instructor	Quarter Completed
TH 501	Introduction to Graduate Studies	1	Bellah	Summer 2009
TH 510	Studies in Dramatic Literature	4	McKay	Summer 2009
TH 540	Graduate Directing I	3	Brown	Summer 2009
TH 543	Acting Fundamentals	3	Edie	Summer 2009
TH 546	Teaching Shakespeare Performance	3	Edie	Summer 2009
TH 571	Design Methodologies	3	Hanuik	Summer 2009
TH 541	Graduate Directing II	3	Hubbard	Summer 2010
TH 542	Musical Theatre Directing	4	Brown	Summer 2010
TH 531	Mime and Movement	3	Bellah	Summer 2010
TH 583	Settings and Props	3	Barnett	Summer 2010
TH 521	Curriculum and Program Development	3	Forier-Edie	Summer 2010
TH 530	Playwriting Application	3	Forier-Edie	Summer 2010
TH 502	Introduction to Creative Project	1	Bellah	Summer 2011
TH 511	Analysis and Criticism	4	Rollie	Summer 2011
TH 700	Masters Thesis Project	4	Forier-Edie	Summer 2011
TH 539	Directing and Teaching Young Actors	3	Forier-Edie	Summer 2011
TH 562	Costume Accessories	3	McMillen	Summer 2011
TH 568	Lighting Techniques	3	Barrigen	Summer 2011
TH 700	Masters Thesis Project	2	Forier-Edie	Summer 2012

Total Credit Requirements - 56

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Patrick Williams

Undergraduate Study:

Emporia State University, 1993-1997

Graduate Study:

Central Washington University, 2009-2012

Professional Experience:

Actor: 1995-2008

Stage Manager: 1997-2001

Playwright: 2002-Present

Director: 1998-Present

High School Teacher: 2003-2010

High School Administrator: 2010-Present

Acknowledgements

“There are two situations that make interesting stories when an extraordinary person is plunged into the commonplace, and when an ordinary person gets involved in extraordinary events.”

- Sister Helen Prejean

Thank you for helping me tell the story of *Dead Man Walking* and forever changing the Theatre Arts Program at Mater Dei High School. I truly appreciate all the efforts of Elise Forier-Edie, Scott Robinson, Brenda Hubbard, George Bellah and all the faculty at Central Washington University Theatre Department. I also thank my friends and family, the Mater Dei High School community and the Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project organization. Lastly, thank you to my loving husband. Thank you everyone for inspiring me to inspire others.

- Patrick Williams

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MASTER'S THESIS PROJECT

PLAYSCRIPT APPROVAL FORM

(PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE READ THE PLAY SELECTION CRITERIA SECTION IN YOUR GRADUATE HANDBOOK)

SCRIPT TITLE Dead Man Walking – School Theatre Project

PLAYWRIGHT Tim Robbins

NUMBER OF ACTS 2 APPROXIMATE TOTAL PLAYING TIME 2 HOURS 15 MIN.

CAST (fill in with the appropriate numbers)

MEN 10+ WOMEN 10+ CHILDREN _____ OVER 40 Approx 8

ROLES REQUIRING PEOPLE OF COLOR 1 role must be Caucasian, rest of cast color-blind ROLES COULD DOUBLE 20+

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAST 20+ (most likely 35)

OTHER CASTING CONCERNS: Considering splitting up the Lead Role between 2 Actresses. 1 will perform Monologues, 1 will perform in scenes. The leading role of Sister Helen never leaves the stage, it is a very demanding role.

ARTISTIC STAFF (check those needed for this play or production idea)

MUSICAL DIRECTOR NA DANCE CHOREOGRAPHER NA

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER NA DIALECT COACH YES

SPECIALTY HIRE – Will attempt to have Tim Robbins &/or Sister Helen visit cast. Most teachers on campus will help with dramaturgy and teach aspects of theme in their classrooms. The project requires cross-curriculum involvement. Stipends will be arranged for some teachers for helping with costumes, set, etc.

ORCHESTRA/BAND (specify what size) 2 students playing guitar

Will you be fulfilling any of the above? Yes If so, which? Fight Choreography

Will a guest artist be fulfilling any of the above? Yes If so, which? Dialect Coach

SCENERY/PROPS (check those needed for this play or your concept of the play)

UNIT SET? YES NUMBER OF SETTINGS: TBD

HISTORICAL PERIOD early 1980s GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Louisiana

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SET CONCERNS OR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Need to create several interiors of houses, offices and prison cells. TBD – most likely will be suggestive.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PROPS 100+ PERIOD 1980s

DIFFICULT OR UNUSUAL PROPS? YES & NO DESCRIBE: Rape scene in a car will be done through shadow projection.

Prison props and staff accessories could be hard to find/create. Regular items like Bibles, telephones & microphones will be easy. The notes at the back of the script suggest using a suggestion of props and locations by using tables and chairs. However, the most “real” items should be at the execution (gurney, straps, needles, etc.)

WEAPONS OR FIREARMS? YES HOW MANY? TBD DESCRIBE: Prison staff guns and the crime pistol

COSTUMES (CHECK THOSE NEEDED FOR THIS PLAY OR YOUR CONCEPT OF THE PLAY)

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF COSTUMES PER CHARACTER TBD

HISTORICAL PERIOD 1980s SEASON All – indoor & outdoor

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Jail Employees and Prisoners. Nuns, a Priest, a Nurse.

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHOICE OF SCRIPT

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS SCRIPT PRODUCED? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE)

I have seen five productions so far. The staging and casting has varied.

I took a course through California State University East Bay in October of 2008 taught by Sister Fenlon. I have already started the process with her and my school to secure the rights. The Catholic High School that I teach at has helped me create an annual social issues school wide theatrical event called Project: Discourse. This play would be the Project: Discourse for 2011-2012.

HAVE YOU DONE THIS PLAY BEFORE? BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTION:

I have never worked directly on this production. However, I was an employee of Opera Pacific when they produced the operatic version and I have consulted/attended productions by other local public and Catholic High Schools. I have long been a fan of the autobiography and the movie versions of this powerful story.

WHY SHOULD YOUR ORGANIZATION PRODUCE THIS SCRIPT?

Our school wants students to use critical thinking skills and to improve discussion skills amongst peers. Our Religion and History departments teach Capital Punishment and other social issues associated with this play. In an effort to bridge collaboration between departments, this project will need the help of every department. It will be the third school wide event known as Project: Discourse. We are planning to bring in various community members (judges, attorneys, advocates, nuns, etc.) to be on a panel and to speak to classes before/after and during the production dates. There will be performances during the school day for classes to attend and night performances for the public.

WHAT ARE THE DRAWBACKS (IF ANY) TO DOING THIS PRODUCTION AT YOUR SCHOOL?

Lack of a sufficient theatre. It may be performed in our old gymnasium. TBD.

Brief Synopsis:

In 1980, Sister Helen Prejean regularly visits Angola Prison near New Orleans to help a death row inmate come to terms with himself. The prisoner, Matthew Poncelet had killed seventeen year old Walter Delacroix and raped and killed eighteen year old Hope Percy. Throughout the play, Sister Helen Prejean confides in the audience about her journey in helping this inmate admit his guilt and set his soul free before his execution. She faces many challenging conversations with employees of the prison, family members of the victims and with God. Ultimately, both Sister Helen Prejean and Matthew Poncelet come to terms with their internal struggles. At the climax Matthew says, "For I acknowledge my offense and my sin is before me always" and then is executed. Sister leaves the audience with a message that "the only way to stop the mad circle of violence and retribution is through love and reconciliation.

(visit dmwplay.org for details of the school theatre project)

SUBMITTED BY: (Printed Name) Patrick Williams Date Submitted: July 27, 2010

(Signature) _____

Thesis Chair Approval: Elise Forier-Edie Date Approved: 11/30/10

Thesis Committee Members Approval: Brenda Hubbard Date Approved: 11/4/2010
David Brown

Graduate Coordinator Approval: Scott Robinson Date Approved: _____

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.



Death Penalty Discourse Network

Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project

Dear Young Americans and Teachers,

To widen the reflection and discourse on the death penalty in our country we are extending our invitation to schools across the country to produce Tim's stage play, *Dead Man Walking*, based on Sister Helen Prejean's book. When the film hit theatres across the country in 1996, we were amazed at the way it provoked discussion on the death penalty. Like the film we have shaped the stage play to encourage discourse and discovery regarding this very important social and human rights issue.

Since the fall of 2004, 146 schools have performed the play with fantastic results. Now with your help we'd like to expand this invitation even further across our nation through your many networks: school theatres, student and academic associations, as well as professional and community networks. Word about this unique Play Project continues to spread, but we believe that it will be your energy and knowledge of the schools, publications, and associations in your communities that will multiply this invitation beyond our wildest dreams.

In entrusting the play to you our only requirements are that schools who participate:

1. Involve at least two other academic departments (law, sociology, humanities, criminal justice, etc.) to provide courses related to the death penalty and including Sister Helen's first book, *Dead Man Walking*, in the syllabus, as well as her most recent book *The Death of Innocents*.
2. We especially invite the art and music departments to sponsor creative projects on the issue (the CD of *Dead Man Walking*, reissued by Sony, may spark the imaginations of musicians and future composers).
3. Then give us feedback on your production of DMW: creative initiatives that you did on campus or with other schools or community organizations, suggestions on how to expand the discourse on campus and in the local community, and what worked or didn't work.
4. We ask that you not produce the play for commercial gain.

As we move into the fifth year of this outstanding national project, we are fueled and inspired by the creativity and talent that we've seen in schools throughout the country. We are experiencing, first hand, the power of theatre arts and academic study to stir hearts and minds to new levels of understanding and compassion not only on school campuses but in their local communities as well.

We hope that you will join us in this unprecedented theatre enterprise.

To participate in this project simply contact the Play Project Coordinator, Maureen Fenlon, at 504-940-6583 or email her at playproject@dpediscourse.org. Check out our Web site at www.dmwplay.org and listen to the audio clips (click the Get Involved tab on the Web site) where I (Tim) talk about the Play Project and how it evolved. Also, you can talk with me, Sister Helen, on my blog at <http://sisterhelen.org>.

Sincerely,

Signature is illegible.

Signature is illegible.

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.



GRADUATE COMMITTEE AND OPTION APPROVAL FORM
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
 (Submit the original)

Note: This form is to be completed as soon as the student has formed a committee and selected an option from the list below. Submit original to the Office of Graduate Studies in Barge 305.

Name: Patrick Williams Birth Date: [REDACTED]
 Address: [REDACTED] Student ID: [REDACTED]
 Email: patr [REDACTED]

Check option:	Indicate credits to be received for the thesis or option:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Written Exam*	TH 700	Master's Thesis	6
<input type="checkbox"/> Project	Course No.	Title	Credits
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creative Project			
<input type="checkbox"/> Studio Project	Course No.	Title	Credits
<input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio Review			
<input type="checkbox"/> Thesis (standard)	Style Manual for Thesis/Project		
<input type="checkbox"/> Thesis (journal-ready)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide journal guidelines plus a recent article from that journal in student's field of study.			

*Students taking written exam option may omit items 1-5 below.

1. Proposed Title:	<u>Direction of the production <i>Dead Man Walking</i></u>
2. Purpose of Study:	<u>The direction of <i>Dead Man Walking</i> serves as the culminating experience in theatre arts graduate studies.</u>
3. Scope of Study:	<u>Documentation based upon the preparation of pre-production research, post production evaluation, and the direction of the production (including casting and rehearsal of actors, collaboration and design of theatrical elements, and the oral examination).</u>
4. Procedure to be used:	<u>Three phases of study shall be included: 1. Pre-Production Research and Thesis Documentation. 2. Rehearsal and Direction of Production. 3. Post-Production Evaluation and Documentation.</u>

5. Does the procedure involve collection of data obtained from

Human Subjects (including use of surveys)? Yes** ☐ No ☒

Use of Animals? Yes** ☐ No ☒

** If yes, your procedures must be approved in writing by the Human Subjects Committee or the Animal Care and Use Committee before you initiate your research.

<u>Professor Elise Forier-Edie</u> Committee Chair (typed or printed)	<u>[REDACTED]</u> Committee Chair (signature)	<u>07-07-11</u> Date
<u>Professor Brenda Hubbard</u> Committee Member (typed or printed)	<u>[REDACTED]</u> Committee Member (signature)	<u>7/8/11</u> Date
<u>Professor David Brown</u> Committee Member (typed or printed)	<u>[REDACTED]</u> Committee Member (signature)	<u>7-12-11</u> Date
Approved by: <u>Scott R. Robinson</u> Dept Chair/Designee* (signature) Date	Approved by: <u>[REDACTED]</u> Dean of Graduate Studies Date	

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.

*in the case of interdisciplinary programs, this form should be signed by the relevant Program Director/Co-Director AND relevant Dept chair. In cases where they cannot agree to sign for approval the approval will be made or denied by the relevant interdisciplinary program advisor

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<input type="checkbox"/> Project	Course No.	Title	Credits
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<input type="checkbox"/> Studio Project	Course No.	Title	Credits
<input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio Review			
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Human Subjects (including use of surveys)? Yes** ☐ No ☒

Use of Animals? Yes** ☐ No ☒

** If yes, your procedures must be approved in writing by the Human Subjects Committee or the Animal Care and Use Committee before you initiate your research.

<u>Professor Elise Forier-Edie</u> Committee Chair (typed or printed)	_____ Committee Chair (signature)	_____ Date
<u>Professor Brenda Hubbard</u> Committee Member (typed or printed)	_____ Committee Member (signature)	_____ Date
<u>Professor David Brown</u> Committee Member (typed or printed)	_____ Committee Member (signature)	_____ Date
Approved by: _____	Approved by: _____	
Dept Chair/Designee* (signature) _____	Dean of Graduate Studies _____	_____ Date

Please note:
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*in the case of interdisciplinary programs, this form should be signed by the relevant Program Director/Co-Director AND relevant Dept chair. In cases where they cannot agree to sign for approval the approval will be made or denied by the relevant interdisciplinary program advisory



Mater Dei High School

Sa [REDACTED]

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

July 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

Patrick Williams has administrative approval to continue with his planned production of the *Dead Man Walking Project* on November 16-19, 2011. I am aware that this production is a part of his Master's Thesis Project for Central Washington University. He has permission to use the Mater Dei High School facilities and to incorporate this production into the curriculum for his Advanced Theatre Arts classes. This production will also be part of an annual event called *Project: Discourse*, in which other departments on campus will participate.

Sincerely,

Frances Clare
Principal

Please note:

This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.

Project Parameters

Mater Dei High School (MDHS) opened in 1950 in a struggling neighborhood in Santa Ana, California. That is the same year the gymnasium was built and first used. Since then it has gone through some changes, mostly sections of the building being added on. In the late 1950s, there was a large kitchen and athletic office built. These areas still exist, but the kitchen has been mostly unused since the LeVecke Center cafeteria opened in 2001. The former Athletic Office is now the Performing Arts Office and box office. In an adjacent hallway are two very run-down and small bathrooms, which we usually keep locked. The south end of the gym had a band room and security office built on to it in the mid 1970s. In the 1980s, the Dance and Drill program had a locker room and offices built on the east side of the locker rooms. That is the same time period in which a storage room at the northeast corner was transformed into the current MDHS Bookstore. Most gym classes and sports utilized this building until 2006.

In August of 2006 a new gymnasium, the Muerillo Athletic Center, opened and is now where all of the Athletic program exists. Since then the old gymnasium has been renamed the Monarch Pavilion and has become a make-shift Performing Arts Center. In 2007 we transformed the former girls' locker room into a sort of Black Box theatre classroom called the Little Theatre. Soon after we transformed the boys locker room into storage areas for the Theatre, Choir and Dance programs. We also created a passageway through the former locker rooms so that one can travel from the Little Theatre to either side of the Monarch Pavilion stage.

Currently, Band classes rehearse in the adjacent Band room, Dance and Color Guard classes/performances happen in the Monarch Pavilion and the Theatre program exists inside of the Little Theatre. Since the space became the Monarch Pavilion, it is used all the time for various events including Red Cross Blood Drives, Advance Placement Testing days, the annual

Visual Art Show, Cheerleading clinics and outside rentals for Volleyball/Basketball competitions. In 2015, we plan to demolish this whole area and then build a new Performing Arts Center to open in 2017. The school doesn't do regular repairs on the venue anymore (missing ceiling tiles, loud vents, broken bleachers) because it will be torn down.

The Monarch Pavilion is a standard old gymnasium with wooden floor, no air conditioning, six basketball goals with retractable bleachers on the west side. The school's mascot, Alma Matter and many banners of previous championships line the walls. Because we are ranked by ESPN as the number one sports school in the country, I have not had much luck getting permission to remove the sports memorabilia from the hallway and walls. We have no dressing rooms, green room, shops, control booth nor anything a proper theatre might have. Although we have treated this venue for the past five years primarily as a Performing Arts center, it sure feels like it is currently being used as a gym.

There is a traditional gym stage on the east side of the venue. It has two stairways on each side that are not easily accessible by a large cast, and lacks wing space. There are circuit breakers for the whole venue on stage left. This area is where one can turn on/off the eight theatrical lights that hang above the gym and also operate the old rough sound system. The stage area is fourteen feet deep and twenty-six feet wide. It still has the original floor boards and a concrete wall upstage. There are some old pullies that no longer work and no fly space. The stage is four feet above the gym floor, underneath is where the Bingo tables are stored. This causes any walking on the stage to make a deep thud sound. The proscenium is fourteen feet tall and twenty feet wide. It has a bright red velour curtain that never closes completely and does not flow all the way to the ground. This is where I am considering having a rear projection screen mounted for *Dead Man Walking*.

The school plays and the annual senior musical were performed on the old gym stage until 1984, then the school started renting venues offsite. In 2005, I produced a Shakespeare production in the campus Grotto venue and many administrators remarked that they wished all plays were back on campus again. In October of 2009 we produced our first full-length production inside the Little Theatre (old locker room) and in November 2009 we produced the musical comedy *Lucky Stiff* on the Monarch Pavilion stage. We set-up folding chairs for the audience, hired the McNally Enterprises company to bring in professional sound and lighting. The feedback was very positive and we have since produced two more shows in the Little Theatre and three more productions in the Monarch Pavilion. With the exception of no air conditioning, most audiences have expressed their satisfaction of having these performances be on campus in our own facilities. It has helped us keep ticket prices down, rehearsals end earlier and allows us to use the Mater Dei Facilities Department crew to build/strike productions. Since we put on five productions a year with a small budget and have over a hundred theatre students, it is important that we find creative ways to use the Little Theatre and Monarch Pavilion venues.

For our production of *Dead Man Walking*, we will be up against some venue conflicts. The Red Cross Blood Drive is one week before final dress and the Dance program Fall Showcase is on the night before our load-in/tech day. Due to our busy school calendar, our show dates are not flexible. Since Mater Dei is being reviewed for Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) this year and because our first two *Project: Discourse* productions were successful on a small scale, my administration wants *Dead Man Walking* to be a production that the whole school can attend during the school day. This is in addition to having a multi-curricular discourse about capital punishment. Although it is an honor to be in charge of a production that will bring so many educational aspects to our school, it does come with some problems. We need to figure

out how to show more than 2,000 students the play inside the gym on November 16 and 17th.

The venue has a capacity limit of 590, there is not enough stage area and we lack sound/lights to make sure the large audience will be able to hear/see the production. We can use the Little Theatre as a green room. Since we are showing the play for free to these students, we will not sell the usual amount of evening performance tickets. We have a \$9,000 production budget to cover professional sound/lights, and for creating a house to seat 500 audience members. I hope to receive additional funds from the participating departments and/or the administration to off-set the cost of accommodating the school time performances.

Our school is a very busy place. During our rehearsal period, our cast members will be performing on promotional tours and a student directed event called *ShortsFest*. However, they will also be very involved with sports, testing and volunteering at their Parishes on Sundays. There are several dates in which we are not allowed to rehearse for this play due to football games, Homecoming activities and Mass days. One thing we do have in our favor, is we traditionally produce a play in mid-October, but due to a teacher's recent resignation, the administration has decided to not have that production this year so that the new teacher can work as our Stage Manager in a effort to learn our culture before directing their first show in February. We also have other faculty members that like to work on our shows as costumers, vocal coaches, supervisors, etc. Many parents and alumni usually jump on board to help with cast meals, supervision and last minute needs. Our school wants this production to be an important experience for the students in the cast and the audience. We have a lot of emotional and academic support from our administration, and hopefully some financial support too.

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
PROJECT: DISCOURSE 2011, MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8/14	8/15 Send a draft of Section 2 to Advisor	8/16 Post Audition forms & sample monologues on Website	8/17 Freshman Day of Welcome, Advertise & Explain Audition Process	8/18 Meet with Curriculum Coordinator for <i>Project: Discourse</i>	8/19 Submit Section 2 to Advisor and Chair	8/20
8/21	8/22 Faculty In-service, coordinate curriculum aspects with various Department Chairs	8/23 Freshmen Orientation, Advertise & Explain Audition Process	8/24 Senior & Junior Orientation, Advertise & Explain Audition Process	8/25 Sophomore Orientation, Advertise & Explain Audition Process	8/26 Finish Drafting Set Design Meet with Publicity	8/27 Begin Blocking in Prompt Script
8/28	8/29 Meet with Costumer, discuss concept and budgets, etc	8/30 3:00 to 6:00 Auditions	8/31 3:00 to 6:00 Callbacks	9/1 Theatre Arts Club Meeting, announce & post cast list	9/2 Distribute Scripts & Schedules to Cast Members	9/3 Finish Blocking Prompt Script
9/4	9/5 Labor Day No School	9/6 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 1 st Read thru 7:00 New Parent Meeting, advertise & speak about DMW	9/7 ShortsFest Auditions No DMW Rehearsal Advanced Theatre class creates prop list	9/8 2:15 to 5:00 2 nd Read thru & table work	9/9 3:00 to 5:00 3 rd Read thru & table work	9/10
9/11	9/12 Out of Town No DMW rehearsal	9/13 ShortsFest Dress No DMW rehearsal 6:30 – Frosh/Soph Parent Night	9/14 ShortsFest Performs No DMW rehearsal Hire Sound/Lights	9/15 ShortsFest Performs No DMW rehearsal Order T-shirts & postcards, etc	9/16 3:00 to 5:30 4 th Read thru Leads only	9/17 9:30 to 10:00am Cast Parent Meeting 10:00 to 12:00 Initial Blocking Act 1 ensemble scenes
9/18	9/19 3:00 to 6:00 Blocking p.1 to 17 Meet with Curriculum Coordinator for <i>Project: Discourse</i>	9/20 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:30 Review Blocking p. 1 to 17 6:30 – Junior/Senior Parent Night	9/21 3:00 to 5:00 Review & cont blocking Act 1 ensemble scenes	9/22 2:15 to 4:30 Stumble p. 1 to 17 Stumble Act 1 ensemble scenes	9/23 3:00 to 4:30 Blocking p. 20 to 23 & p.29 to 33	9/24 9:30am to 12:30pm Block p.24 to 27 Review p.20 to 23 & p.29 to 33 *Possibly run p. 1 to 17

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
PROJECT: DISCOURSE 2011, MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9/25	9/26 No Rehearsal, Due to Improv Club prep for PA Tour	9/27 No Rehearsal due to Performing Arts Promotional Tour	9/28 No Rehearsal due to Performing Arts Promotional Tour	9/29 2:15 to 4:30 Run & Work p. 1 to 33	9/30 No rehearsal due to Home Football game	10/01 9:30am to 12:30pm Block p.33 to 38 Review, Run & Work p. 1 to 38
10/02	10/03 No Rehearsal due to Meetings	10/04 2:30 Improv Club Meet with Build crew	10/05 3:00 to 5:00 Block & Work p.38 to 42	10/06 2:15 to 4:30 Block & Work p.42 to 48	10/07 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events	10/08 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events
10/09 HC Dance	10/10 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events Meet with Admin to finalize 11/16 & 17 performance days	10/11 No Rehearsal due to Testing on Campus Meet with Curriculum Coordinator for <i>Project: Discourse</i>	10/12 Testing half day CAST MEAL 12:00 1:00 to 4:00 Run p. 1 to 48 7:00 -8 th grade night Tickets for sale?	10/13 ShortsFest Dress Rehearsal Prepare scene from DMW to perform Meet with House manager to plan	10/14 6:00 ShortsFest call 7:30 ShortsFest Perform Show DMW scene Sell DMW tix at SF	10/15 No Rehearsal
10/16	10/17 No rehearsal due to Meetings	10/18 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Block p. 49 to 54	10/19 3:00 to 5:00 Review Blocking p. 49 to 54 Run/Work p.38 to 54	10/20 2:15 to 4:15 Character Development presentations due	10/21 3:00 to 5:30 Run & Notes All Act 1 (Off Book!)	10/22 No rehearsal due to ACT testing
10/23	10/24 No Rehearsal due to Improv Club prep	10/25 Improv Club Chuckles for Chairty Halloween Event	10/26 3:00 to 5:30 Run & Notes All Act 1	10/27 2:15 to 4:30 Blocking p.55 to 62	10/28 3:00 to 4:30 Review Blocking p. 55 to 62	10/29 9:30am to 12:00pm Blocking p. 62 to 68 Run & work p. 55 to 68
10/30	10/31 Halloween, No Rehearsal	11/01 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Blocking p. 74 to 78	11/02 3:00 to 5:00 Blocking p. 68 to 74 Ensemble scenes	11/03 2:15 to 5:30 Run & work p. 55 to 78 Approve build crew plans for load-in	11/04 No Rehearsal due to Football game at Angel Stadium	11/05 9:00am Block p. 78 to 91 12:00pm CASTMEAL 1:00pm Blocking p. 91 to 95 2:30 Stumble run of Act 2 up to p. 95

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
PROJECT: DISCOURSE 2011, MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
11/06	11/07 3:00 to 6:00 Blocking p. 95 to 97 Work Monologues <i>Prejean, Matt,</i> <i>Delacroix, Marybeth</i>	11/08 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 2	11/09 3:00 to 6:00 Run/notes/work Act 1	11/10 Visit Day Event am 2:15 to 5:30pm Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/11 Load-in Lights (day) 3:00 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/12 No Rehearsal, Do homework! Dance Showcase 7:00
11/13 8:00am Load-in Set, Sound, Props MEAL 12:00 1:00 to 6:30 Tech cues, then Tech run show	11/14 3:00 Costumes 4:00 Company Meeting 4:30 Dress run Act 1 6:00 CAST MEAL 7:00 Dress run Act 2 9:00 Notes Dismiss by 10:00	11/15 Cast get own meals & rest after-school 5:00 Call 6:00 Dress Run 9:00 notes Dismiss by 10:00	11/16 (tentative) 7:45 Call 9:00 House Opens 9:20 Freshmen Show 11:30 CAST MEAL 12:00 House open 12:20 Soph Show <i>Discourse:</i> 9:00 Sophomores 12:00 Freshmen	11/17 (tentative) 7:45 Call 9:00 House Opens 9:20 Senior Show 11:30 CAST MEAL 12:00 House open 12:20 Junior Show <i>Discourse:</i> 9:00 Juniors 12:00 Seniors	11/18 Cast get own meals & rest after-school Creative Project Committee Chair, CAPPIES & CETA attend tonight! 6:00 Call 7:00 House Opens 7:30 Show	11/19 Meet with Committee Chair in afternoon CETA attend tonight 6:00 Call 7:00 House Opens 7:30 Show 10:00 Strike
11/20 Write Thank you cards & tax letters	11/21 Send out Thank you cards and tax donation letters Student survey, etc for DMW organization	11/22 Take in dry cleaning Pay any outstanding bills Finish evaluation and send to DMW headquarters	11/23 Work on Section 2, based on meeting with Committee Chair	11/24 Improve Section 2	11/25 Work on Section 3 Evaluation, etc	11/26 Continue working on all Sections through March 2012

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
PROJECT: DISCOURSE 2011, MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

Spring 2012 Dates

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3/25 Finish up Section 3	3/26 Email Section 3 to Committee Chair	3/27 Apply for Permit to do Oral Examination	3/28	3/29	3/30	3/31 Work on Binder
4/1 Work on Binder	4/2 Work on Binder	4/3 Work on Binder	4/4 Work on Binder	4/5 Work on Binder	4/6 Work on Binder	4/7 Work on Binder
4/8 Work on Binder	4/9 Work on Binder	4/10 Submit Binder, advice from Committee Chair	4/11	4/12	4/13 When receive advice on Section 3 & Binder, work on improving it	4/14 Continue working on improving through materials thru mid May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5/13	5/14 Mail Final Binder Committee Chair	5/15	5/16	5/17 Call to make sure Binder was received	5/18	5/19

Summer 2012 Dates

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7/1	7/2	7/3	7/4	7/5	7/6	7/7 Travel to CWU
7/8	7/9 Possible Oral Examination Day	7/10 Possible Oral Examination Day	7/11 Possible Oral Examination Day	7/12	7/13	7/14

Evaluation of the Play as a Production Vehicle

Mater Dei High School has chosen to produce the *Dead Man Walking High School Theatre Project* because it has been a successful educational experience at two local Catholic schools and it proves cross-curricular collaboration for the school-wide WASC accreditation process. I created an event called *Project: Discourse*; this will be our third annual production. The purpose is to have a play be more than just entertainment, rather a reason for various departments to motivate their students to explore and discuss social issues. This production is based on the writings of Sister Helen Prejean, the play's protagonist. The book is about her experiences with two capital punishment cases. The Advanced Theatre Arts students were given a copy of the original novel to read over the summer. We have over hundred students that participate in theatre on a regular basis, I assume approximately 40 students will audition for this production. My aim is to cast any student who auditions because I want them to be able to grow as individuals from this intense process. I will be bifurcating the role of Sister Helen Prejean. I believe it is too much pressure for one student to handle. By making making this choice two students can have a chance to play the leading role. One actress will perform the narration, while the other actress performs the dialogue.

I have wanted to direct this play for many years. I am looking forward to the challenge before me. This is a chance for our theatre program to grow more, for me to work with a large cast and for many of my colleagues to get involved. Because of the positive response from our curriculum committee, it is really going to make this endeavor be more than just a show. Part of the royalty agreement is the requirement to have two or more departments on campus have discourse and educational activities associated with the production. Our former Assistant Principal of Curriculum has volunteered to be the curriculum coordinator. We have been meeting

with various department heads and in August will finalize our plans for implementing *Dead Man Walking* lesson plans into classes across campus. I will also be working with the Choir teacher on choosing appropriate hymns to be sung in performance and with the Visual Arts teacher to have her students create our publicity. On Wednesday November 16 and Thursday November 17, the entire study body will attend the production during the school day. Also on those days students will also be immersed in reflection writing, group discussions and attend a forum with guest speakers.

The students in our cast and audience have a lot to learn from this production. The first line of the play is, "The faith of my youth is the faith of my future" (Robbins 1). Being a Catholic high school, it is very important that our students realize their upbringing, morals and value system is their foundation for building their futures. This story about a nun struggling with intense issues by relying on her foundation is a great lesson for our students. They will get a chance to observe a nun character doing her job of teaching students, communicating with a criminal and dealing with the harsh realities of life. Our school recently had our last nun retire; a growing trend in current Catholic education is less priests and nuns teaching at the schools. This generation does not get a chance to see the good work these dedicated people do. The great sacrifices and generous love demonstrated by the protagonist are very honorable examples for our students.

In January 2012, the death penalty will be reinstated in California. By producing this play and holding discourse about the topic in November will be a direct connection for all involved. There are many facts about the expense of death row, number of exonerated prisoners and the legal process presented in this play. However, the human element will be what gets our students to really digest the issue of capital punishment. The themes of dignity, sacrifice and honesty

radiate throughout the script. These themes are important at our school.

Our school is 80% wealthy families and 20% very poor families. In recent years, the bullying between the rich kids and poor kids has escalated so much that our administration has implemented an amazing process called Rachel's Challenge. It is an international movement of compassion inspired by a student who died at Columbine High School. Our school has already seen some improvements in the areas of racial and economic bullying. We will be entering our second full year of Rachel's Challenge this fall and it's themes of courage, peace, faith and dignity are a great tie in with this production. This script addresses poverty and shows the struggle of those in life that come from nothing in the New Orleans area. The protagonist explains early in the script about her advocacy for the poor, and one could argue that the inmate character is on death row because of his poverty. Our ministry department has taken students to the New Orleans area three times to help rebuild neighborhoods affected by Hurricane Katrina. I hope the members of that department can use our production to promote their efforts for their next journey.

Ultimately, I want our cast and audience to absorb and live the strong message of Sister Helen Prejean. Her character's speech near the end of the play states "Jesus Christ showed us that the only way to stop the mad circle of violence and retribution was through love and reconciliation." (Robbins 96). I truly believe that her words can help our students to make the world a better place.

Concept Statement

The issue of capital punishment has become an argument which many people are ardently either for or against. Some will quote the Bible in an effort to legitimize their beliefs. If one was to listen to these quotes from the Bible or the quotes from the character of Chaplain Farley, then the death penalty seems right. However, we learn through protagonist Sister Helen Prejean that justice is not a black and white issue; rather it is a grey area. She learns "the politics of the death penalty are not what's important . . ." (Robbins 59). The path, in which she tries to figure out just what is right, is the journey the audience needs to experience too. By having this production be our choice for the annual social issues *Project: Discourse* event, our school community will get to discuss the grey area of capital punishment. "The Blackboard" by Conrad Marca Relli (in Appendix A) at first glance is mostly grey area, but through further exploration, an observer sees varying hues and textures of grey. The title of the artwork harkens to the education system in which students learning facts that were written in white chalk on a blackboard. By blending the two colors, a murky grey develops and becomes an area in which opposing viewpoints and varying messages exist. The true learning happens when this grey area is analyzed by the active observer.

The script by Tim Robbins is loosely based on the autobiography *Dead Man Walking* by Sister Helen Prejean. The performance rights are only given to educational institutions who commit to bringing at least two other departments into the experience this play offers. When there is grey area, students and faculty can research, discuss, present and listen to various viewpoints. The Prejean character in the play does the same thing. Ultimately, the Matt Poncelet character must come to terms with his sins and accept God's love. This reconciliation is what will allow his soul to be free when his life is ended. Throughout the

play we witness the two main characters wrestle with these intense issues, which are steeped deep in a grey area.

In an effort to give the audience an intimate experience to explore these issues, the set design needs to approach the audience to involve them. Since my Administration would like to produce this play during the school day for each student to attend, I need the set design to consider the placement of the house. If the largest audience is 500 students, then perhaps the stage can be built in an angle so there are two audience sections. This can give the idea of two sides of an issue surrounding a grey area. Actors should be able to cross to the furthest downstage point for moments that need to effectively command the attention of the audience. The playwright has provided two simple notes about the set (Robbins 98). In honoring his idea of simple surfaces and keeping with our concept, the set and props should be simple, but also mostly grey hues. This will allow the characters to pop, since the visual elements will be void of color. Robbins suggests the death bed and machines be the most realistic items. Since we are working with the journey being a path through grey area, the intense ending will be "black and white" to effectively bring contrast at the climax.

The script calls for Brechtian use of projected quotes, pictures and statistics. The set and lights will need to accommodate a rear projection screen. This can also be used to show the memory sequences through effective use of live shadow projection. Since these two teenagers were killed is a fact, the use of white light and black shadows should be strikingly haunting in this grey play.

Being in a large gymnasium, the sound and lighting need to create an atmosphere of intimacy. Since there will be four performances with large audiences, it is necessary to mic the actors and to hire a professional sound company. The use of live music can grip an

audience and enhance the live experience to keep them in the moment. Hymns and music from the time period could be played/sung live by students. The lighting is very important, since the playwright has written the script without notation of scenes, however many locations are visited and much time passes. The use of lights to draw the eye of the audience are needed. Also, the lighting needs to communicate the various emotions of the play. The prison is a dreary place, but without much set, the lights should make the mood immediately obvious. At the climax, an intense white light should be on Poncelt as he dies, to give the idea of passing on, but also so that each spectator can not help but look.

In staying true to the time period , late 1970s and early 1980s, and to the locations in Louisiana, the costumes should be realistic. The supporting and ensemble characters represent the local color. These community members are the voices of opposing viewpoints and hold to their opinions. These characters have their minds made up about the situation and are not in a grey area. They should wear colors that can represent their mood; perhaps the victim's father wears red so that his anger is easily recognizable. The factions of people should wear coordinating colors, textures and styles so the audience can easily identify who is against the death penalty, who is for it and who are journalists.

Keeping with our concept of "grey area", the look of the clothes for the leading characters Prejean and Poncelet can suggest where they are on their philosophical journey. Perhaps Poncelet begins the play in dark grey and black colors to emphasis the idea that he is a bad guy. Then as he forms his friendship with the Nun, his clothes could become more grey colors (t-shirt, jeans, hanky, etc.). The script notes he should be wearing white in the last scene, this is when he has admitted his guilt and accepted God into his life. His transition from black, to grey to white can help the audience recognize the change he goes through and

realize he is ultimately on his way to Heaven. The Prejean character is conflicted throughout most of the play, therefore some grey clothes can represent her struggle with this issue. However, another actress will play Prejean in the future as she narrates the play. Since this Prejean has already experience the journey, her clothes should tell us she no longer sees capitol punishment as a grey area, rather she is very clear that what matters most is human dignity. There are references in the script that she is not wearing the traditional Nun habit.

Through the resources from the *Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project*, it is noted the Prejean character should not be made to look nor act like the real Sister Helen Prejean. This black and white statement leaves the director in a grey area. Through rehearsals, this character should be deeply explored by the actresses playing her and by director to create some one who represents the essence of the real life Nun. This is similar for the character of Matt Poncelet and the other characters in the play. They are loosely base on real life characters found in the autobiography, and more directly from the award winning movie adaptation. However, it is up to the cast members and director to explore possible interpretations through out rehearsals in an effort to define them. Something that is “black and white” are the accents. In hiring a Dialect Coach, our cast will attempt to speak with an appropriate accent for the New Orleans region.

Near the end of Act 2, the audience should realize that this play is about much more than just the death penalty. Maybe Chaplain Farley is correct when he says, “The politics of the death penalty are not what’s important here” (Robbins 59). Through the journey of this production, the audience and all involved should ultimately come away from any grey area with the wisdom Robbins wrote for Prejean’s final message, “. . . the only way to stop the mad circle of violence and retribution is through love and reconciliation” (Robbins 96).

Initial Action/Conflict Analysis

1. Dramatic Event – Matt Poncelet killed a boy and raped a girl in 1978. Now in 1984, he is to be executed for his crimes.
2. Protagonist – Sister Helen Prejean's journey is the story. She becomes the Spiritual Advisor for Poncelet during his final days. She sticks to her goal to be there for him.
3. Sequence of Actions.

Beginning – Prejean, after being inspired by speaker Sister Marie Agusta Neal, works with her Sisters of St. Joseph to create an educational environment for poor children in New Orleans. It is there that she is asked to correspond with a prisoner.

Major Event #1 – Poncelet asks Prejean to help with the court process.

Major Event #2 – Families of the victims lash out at Prejean for helping the killer. This leads to her trying to reach out to them more and she learns their point of view.

Major Event #3 – Prejean learns the inhumane nature of the prison system

Major Event #4 – Prejean helps Poncelet to understudy the lessons of the Bible and to see in himself the power to admit his wrongs.

End – After the death of Poncelet, Prejean encourages audience to heed her advice the advice of Ghandi and then continues to help Delacroix find comfort.

4. Dramatic Structure.

Initial Action – Prejean is told there is someone who needs help

Introductory Incident – Prejean realizes Poncelet doesn't have anyone

Inciting Action – Prejean visits Poncelet on death row and commits to helping him

Complication – The appeals process, the community, the prison staff, the victims

families, and Poncelet all challenge Prejean's will to help Poncelet.

Crises – In order to free his soul, Prejean pressures Poncelet into reconciliation

Climax – Poncelet is killed by the system, Prejean knows that Poncelet's soul is free

Denouement – Prejean helps the audience and a victim's family to continue to heal

Given Circumstances

Dead Man Walking is set in various locations through out Louisiana. To understand the roots of the people in this play, it is important to explore their location and their culture. We begin in New Orleans at Hope House. The region was populated in 1755 by a group of Roman Catholics who were French colonists in Nova Scotia. When they migrated under pressure from the British authorities, some were shipped, others walked through out New England for years before learning they would be accepted in Louisiana. There is a deep rooted Roman Catholicism in the people in the New Orleans Region. This can explain the challenge for Matthew Poncelet, which are Biblical and French names respectively. He must come to terms with his beliefs and reconcile so that his soul is free. The strong Catholic beliefs of this community are very important in New Orleans and near by Slidell. There are 22 parishes in this part of Louisiana and it is known as Cajun country. Cajun is a word that comes from a certain pronunciation of the French immigrants name Arcadians, A-caj-uns. (Louisiana.gov)

Slidell Louisiana is a 35 minute drive south of New Orleans. It is a run-down town that has been economically depressed for years. Slidell seems like a place that young people need to leave in order to have a future. Just the word itself can sound like sliding down or said another way sounds like a place for those who have already slid down hill. Tim Robbins describes a part of the tragedy of Hope Percy is that "She almost got out of Slidell" (Robbins 42). The parents have jobs and houses in Slidell, but they want their children to move on. Because of the tragedy, they are all stuck now. Delacroix needs to figure out if he is selling his house or keeping it by himself. The Percy family is raising their younger daughter in the same house and will probably stay there forever. They are stuck in their convictions and nothing is going to change them. The memories and ghosts of their children and their dreams for their children still haunt their houses.

These folk speak about their typical family house by mentioning their kitchens or rugs in conversations that help bring the story home for the audience. The requirement of projections in the production allow for displaying images of houses from the region while performing the scenes at the houses. New Orleans, the closest major city to small town Slidell, elected its first African-American Mayor Earnest Morial in 1977. Perhaps this could have added to Poncelet's racist beliefs. We learn that the Inside Edition and other television shows have visited Lucille's house to report about her son.

Slidell has the Big Branch Marsh National Refuge to the west and to the east if the Pearl River State Management Area. This gives us the idea that the crimes could have gone on for sometime due to the various natural environments. It would be hard to find bodies in the swampy areas and dense tree areas. Parts of the Slidell area are below sea level. This gives the image of being underground and death. Hope Percy and Matt Poncelet should begin the play on the lowest level which is the gym floor. Then they raise up levels as their stories are being told by the living characters in the play. Ultimately they become images on the projection screen. After Poncelet relives the death during his execution, the dead kids should walk amongst Poncelet's level, which is always the lower stage level. They should be even with him when he dies so that the audience feels them there at his death since he was there at their deaths back in the woods by Slidell. Poncelet's world should be the lower level of stage decking the whole show. The only exception is when he takes communion from Chaplain Farley on his way to the execution. That moment can be on the upper level because he is having a spiritually higher moment.

A house that is based on a specific house is the one Sister Helen Prejean lives in and works at. Deep in the Saint Thomas Projects of New Orleans is Hope House. Sister Helen

Prejean grew up in an affluent family in Baton Rouge, so this situation is something very different for her. She embraces it. The poor people in the community are her mission. She lives like them and relates with them. She teaches them to grow. Sister Colleen and Sister Helen sleep in the same room upstairs and teach students in a common area on the lower level. They have the same purpose in life and have experienced the process of becoming a Sister of St. Joseph together. They share some of the lightest moments of the play with each other. This demonstrates the humorous side of Sr. Helen. Sister Colleen just happens to be reading important biblical lessons to Hope House students as Sr. Helen is having challenge times in Angola. The students seeking tutorial advice and bible lessons from the Sisters of St. Joseph at Hope House were from the violent neighborhood. Prejean describes the community as “Almost every family I meet in St. Thomas has a relative in prison.” (Prejean 9) Sharing a space in Hope House is a non-profit group that counsels prisoners. Today, Hope House is still involved in prison ministry at Orleans and Angola Prisons. These Sisters have helped many youth escape and recover from crime. They helped them have faith. They have compassion for the youth.

The following quotes from the play describe the St. Thomas Projects:

- “As I lay in bed that evening I heard gunshots. I wondered who had got sucked into the violence tonight in St. Thomas Project. Who would be missing from school? Which mother’s wail would pierce the night?” (Robbins 4)
- “Sometimes on Sunday afternoons when I smell the smoke in the neighborhood and from family barbeques, hear those kids laughing, I sit there in my room and feel like a fool.” (Robbins 66)

Prejean has learned from the people of St. Thomas Projects that goodness is beyond economics and violence. Every person has a good soul and they do express it though love, laughter and

sharing their faith with Sister Helen Prejean. She sometimes feels guilty for not devoting all of her focus on her community. She receives feedback from Herbie and Sister Colleen that the community turns on her for helping a white racist murderer four hours away in Angola.

Due to the extensive drive to Angola and the long hours with Matt Poncelet, our protagonist needs to rest in Baton Rouge at the home she grew up in. This provides for moments with Sister Helen's counselor which is her mother. This allows for a dynamic shift as roles reverse. We learn Sister Helen's anxieties are witness her weak moments. Exchanges at her home in Baton Rouge show the lost girl inside of Prejean who adopted too many pets as child which shows her natural instinct to help others. We also learn of a moment in her childhood in which she was guilty for taking the life of an opossum. Much of the production is concerned with economics. Sr. Helen's father is a very rich lawyer in the state capitol of Baton Rouge. This place is much different from Slidell, but Prejean for some reason had to get out of it. However, it is the place that Hope Percy was to be drive to on July 15, 1978 by her recruiting officer. It is a place someone wanted to get to, while the other character wanted out of. Prejean keeps getting dragged back to past by her current job helping Poncelet. It's a recurring theme in this play, characters return to their past memories while exploring their current condition. In the most important last chance she has to stop the execution is to meet with Governor Fredericks two days before the execution. She has to meet him Baton Rouge and upon arrival it has turned into a media circus. It is obvious that it is a political publicity event during election year in the State Capitol. Sr. Helen loses this challenge, therefore doubting her self and her path. It is important she experiences this in her hometown as it forces her to investigate and reevaluate her own purpose with Poncelet.

Tim Robbins has written several statements through out the script that reference the poor.

The play opens with a tribute to Sister Marie Augusta Neal and how she inspired Sister Helen Prejean. Sr. Neal was a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur. Their university was the first to produce this play version of *Dead Man Walking*. Neal was on a crusade for social justice and human rights. She has written extensively about her ideas and observations. Robbins and Prejean have both been inspired by Sr. Neal and have included the politics of poverty through out the script. Some examples include “99% of death row inmates are poor” (Robbins 21) and “Nobody from money on the Row” (Robbins 11).

Edwin Edwards, four-term governor of Louisiana was first elected in 1972. He reformed the Louisiana prison system to lose the stigma it had throughout out the 1960s as “the bloodiest prison in the south” (Angolamuseum.org). Most changes were implemented during the mid 1970s. So Matt Poncelet would have been part of the first generation to experience the reformed prison system. His handling of prisoners and executions demonstrated a likeability factor for voters, Edwin Edwards’ campaign press often times included Angola Prison. He was re-elected for his third-term as Governor during the same time that Patrick Sonnier (real-life basis for Matt Poncelet) was executed. This is the basis for the character of Govenor Fredericks and helps explain why his meeting with Barber and Prejean turned into a dog and pony show.

The majority of the play takes place on Death Row at Angola, Louisiana. Angola is at the North-west end of Louisiana just off the beautiful Lake Killarney. It is about a 2.5 hour drive to either New Orleans or Slidell from Angola. Baton Rouge is about an hour away. It is a significant distance apart from the other locations in the play which emphasizes the seclusion of the monster from society. Poncelet is removed but still a problem. Since characters travel far for a visit or to attend a Pardon Board hearing, then their conversation is direct and important. It is a big deal to get to Angola for Poncelet’s family, it hasn’t ever happened before and will not

happen again. Getting a chance to have a sit down meeting with Hilton Barber at the prison is important. Earl Delacroix has to confront Sr. Prejean at the Pardon Board because chances of meeting her somewhere else are slim. Chaplain Farley is usually the only spiritual advisor for the death row inmates due to the remote location of the prison. According to the Angola State Penitentiary website, “an inmate is allowed ten approved visitors plus one religious advisor on his lost”.

“The Administration of Louisiana State Penitentiary views visiting as a vital aspect of the inmate's rehabilitation process. This connection to family and friends allows the inmate to make a smooth transition to prison life and help him adapt to society and family life if ever released back into society.” (corrections.state.la.us)

There are various important venues with in the State Penitentiary like the Chaplain's office, the visitors' room, his prison cell, the pardon boardroom, the yard, the death house, the Warden's office and the Execution Chamber. The prison is full of walls and barriers, but in this production we are working with a metaphor of breaking down walls to allow discourse. Even though this script sometimes alludes to walls, doors and prison bars, we will not be using real ones. We will pantomime the opening and closing of doors to allow an audience to imagine a barrier. The guard characters will pantomime locking and unlocking Poncelet's cell in coordination with lighting cues of a Prison bar gobo. The visitors' room as described by Prejean in her autobiography and by the Louisiana State Penitentiary had a caged barrier between visitor and prisoner. To accommodate our simple set/prop design, our production will have a table with the nun on one side and the prisoner on the other. The only walls between them are the obstacles in their personalities. Prejean puts up walls when questioned about sex. Poncelet puts up walls when confronted by Prejean. Our visitors table will symbolize communication and the set will

not be like the real thing, but that's ok because it is theatrical. The fact that three scenes return to the visitor table will establish the idea of the room enough for the audience. We will need to isolate in light and have guards standing by to help the audience to imagine.

The prison yard, hallways and buildings are large. An aerial view of prison shows a unique network of interconnecting buildings. Angola is currently the largest maximum-security prison in our country. At the time of the play approximately 500,000 Americans were behind bars according to Prejean. The text on page 56 tells us that executions take an emotional toll on the employees of the prison. Their costumes and movement, along with prison projections are critical to allowing the audience to believe we have a prison on stage. The text on p55 of the script tells us the Death House of act two is 1.5 miles away from the rest of the Penitentiary. With our scarce set design, but large cast size, we will express the size of the prison by having characters who work their constantly traveling from extreme ends of the performance venue. Although the stage is place of the scenes, the excessive distant the guards, nurse, chaplain and Warden travel will give the audience the idea that a lot happens at this big place.

The parent characters in the show "live" on the higher staging level. It seems to make sense to place the "Father" in the production up there too. Chaplain Farley's office needs to feel tight with a narrow chance of escape. Prejean is intimidated by Farley. His office at the prison is by the administrative offices, near the Warden's office. This is the business part of the prison. He does his business behind closed doors. From the play, we get the idea for many years the prison only had one Chaplain to provide spiritual guidance. By the obstacles Sister Helen Prejean encounters, we learn that in the early 1980s Nuns did not provide spiritual counsel for prisoners. It seems it has changed since then. The website for the Louisiana State Penitentiary Angola currently provides the following information about their Faith-Based Programming:

The Chaplain's Department directly supervises all religious programming for Louisiana State Penitentiary. Many religious denominations are recognized without preferential treatment to any single group. Hundreds of citizen volunteers comprise the heart of religious programming available daily to the inmate population. The combination of inmate-led organizations and citizen volunteers unite to produce a variety of faith-based rehabilitative programs. Citizen volunteers facilitate bible studies, worship services, and prayer groups on a weekly basis. (Louisiana.gov/LSP/visiting.php)

The Warden is spoken about through out the script however he is only in two scenes in which he speaks. The first is in his office to discuss the use of music at executions. He also tells Sr. Helen that he didn't appreciate her singing outside the gates at the Tobias execution. The warden today at Angola is in charge of their annual Rodeo. Even though they didn't have a rodeo back then, it gives me the idea that the Warden needs to come off like the guy that could host a rodeo. He doesn't ride the bulls himself so he his able to keep his appearance slick. The Warden back in the early 1980s was a chubby white guy that reminds me of Colonel Sanders. His office should be very 1970s industrial. Metal chairs, a desk for him. The script calls for a tape cassette player which helps our scarce set/prop design to let the audience understand the time period.

The Warden is also at Pardon Board hearing and the execution. The Pardon Board room is a large brown room. There is a large row of tables at which the Pardon Board sits to hear the cases. The members of the prison staff either stand against walls or sit in 1970s industrial furniture facing the Pardon Board, the inmate stands in between, in the middle. Based on our set design, the audience will feel as if they are in the room too. The staff and family members will need to sit upstage with the panel board, but it will allow the lawyers to have the downstage space to perform in. Poncelet will be placed on the tip end of the triangle stage so that all

audience members get to see his hearing from his point of view. There is flag in the in the Angola Pardon Board room, we will need to provide one either as a prop or a projection. The projection screen could be used more than what Robbins indicates in the script. For a young modern audience, listening to the remarks of the characters combined with key images being projected on a large screen could remind them on being in a classroom during a lesson. The Grey Area discourse happens in the Pardon Board scene, it should feel like an educational debate. The audience learns as Poncelet learns.

The Warden is in charge of the execution. The Execution Chamber at Angola looks like a capsule. There is a large crank knob reminiscent of something on a bank vault or a submarine. Besides strap down team and nurses, the prisoner is alone in there. There are small windows and large windows. The prison staff and invited attendees watch from two separate rooms which look in. The text indicates that most of the cast is present for the execution and they often break the fourth wall to say something they have already spoken earlier in the show. It is cold at the execution, Poncelet needs a blanket. The communion moment happens on the walk to the chamber. Poncelet needs to be walking in a line with Prejean, Warden and several guards to the chamber. We will use the upper stage level to be his communion hallway and the have the lower stage level be the chamber and viewing areas. The extreme sides of the upper level can become an area for Warden, Chaplain, Governor Fredericks and the Poncelet clan be.

Prejean should be by herself at the execution on one side of the lower stage area, the Percy and Delcroix families on the other. The Guards can pantomime opening the chamber door and the nurse can demonstrate the procedure of inserting the syringes. The trickiest things are the machines in the room and the execution bed. It is large, white with black straps and is shaped like a person with their arms out. Although this is a Catholic play at a Catholic school, we need

to tone down referencing Matt Poncelet to being a Christ figure. Logistically wise, it will be difficult to get any hospital style gurney up onto the stage during the action. The scene transitions from being in his solitary cell at the death house, to walking the long hallway to the execution chamber. The majority of the cast is supposed to part of the big scene, so they will need to transform the look of the stage by moving benches to make viewing areas and tables to make an execution bed or roll one on somehow. This can be done while the audience is reading the bible quote projected onto the screen. When Poncelet first arrives to the chamber, the projection screen can show pictures of the real one. When he flashbacks to the murder, it can be seen on the screen through shadow play. The area in between the two portions of the house can be filled with ensemble members who would be people outside of the Penitentiary walls. By relying on pantomime, blocking patterns and projections; the various parts of the large prison can be believable on stage.

References to Time and Dates from the Text

The following list refers to the script of *Dead Man Walking* by Tim Robbins. These are mentioned in the dialogue or the stage directions.

- P.13 Poncelet has been on death row for 6 years
- P. 42 "...on June 15th, the day it happened." P. 44 describes class of 1978. Murder happened on Saturday June 15 1978.
- P. 44 The bodies were discovered on Thursday June 20 1978.
- P.24 "I took a drive a couple of days later on Easter Sunday to visit Matt's mother." This must be April 1984.
- By page 29, the pardon board case is heard one week before execution. It's now six years since the crimes. This must be summer 1984.
- P.39 is in August 1984, Hurricane weather, non-stop rain "Rain, rain, rain; not a good sign."
- P. 50 – 5 days before his execution
- P.56 – "The death house vacation. Three days of quiet."
- P.65 – "Where'd you go yesterday", gives impression that p. 55 to 62 are within 2 days of the Execution Day. P. 65 to 72 must be the day before the Execution.
- P.68 – Later that evening
- P.72 8:00am Execution Day
- P.73 10:30am Execution Day
- P.77 6:30pm Execution Day
- P.79 8:00pm Execution Day
- P.83 10:30pm Execution Day

- P.85 11:00pm Execution Day
- P.87 11:30pm Execution Day
- P.92 Midnight Death
- P.96 A week or so later
- P.97 A month later

The play takes place during a relatively short amount of time. Although in real life Sister Prejean counseled Patrick Sonnier for years, in this script the time has been truncated to be only a matter of about five months. This brings more immediacy to matter of saving Poncelet's life. The heat of the summers in Louisiana can play a part of the tension in play. The second act of the play mostly takes place with in the last three days of Poncelet's life.

The Crime Scene

This play is loosely based on a real experience that Sister Helen Prejean had. She was asked to communicate with a death row inmate named Patrick Sonnier. Through that experience, she learned of the crimes he committed and was there for him at his execution. It is important to understand the original crimes. The following two excerpts are from the autobiography *Dead Man Walking* by Sister Helen Prejean.

“November 7, 1977 . . . The article tells how on the Friday evening before the murders, David LeBlanc, age seventeen, and Loretta Bourque, eighteen, had been “just two happy faces in the crowd at Catholic High School’s homecoming football game.” The couple had each been shot three times at close range in the back of the head with a .22-caliber rifle. The day after the bodies of the couple are discovered, the *Iberian* runs an editorial, which says in part, “It’s hard to imagine that there may be somebody in this fine community of ours who could contemplate, much less carry out, this vilest of vile deeds.” (Prejean 15)

“It takes a month to capture the killers . . . Elmo Patrick Sonnier, age twenty-seven, and Eddie Sonier, age twenty. . . . In addition to the murder charges, the Sonnier brothers face ten counts of aggravated kidnapping and one charge of aggravated rape. Law enforcement authorities have revealed that a number of teenage couples in the area, six weeks before the murders, had been attacked at the local lover’s lane. Two men, posing as security officers, would handcuff the men and molest the women. . . . the young people are revealing what happened to them and identifying the Sonnier Brothers as the assailants.” (Prejean 15)

Previous Action

Note: All Page Numbers refer to the script *Dead Man Walking* by Tim Robbins.

Page 1 – Sister Helen Prejean attended a moving and informative presentation about poverty and crime in America. This was in June 1980 with speaker Sister Marie Augusta Neal.

Page 2 – June 1981, the Sisters moved to St. Thomas Housing Development in New Orleans and worked at Hope House. It shares the space with a political non-profit prisoner organization. Sister Helen Prejean teaches High School students academics at Hope House.

Page 3 – Montoya offers Prejean to be pen pals with a prisoner Matt Poncelet. Sister Prejean is getting involved with Matt Poncelet because for her it “is a logical extension of my work with the poor”.

Page 4 – Poncelet needs a new attorney, Montoya will help find a free one for him.

Page 4 – Poncelet has the prisoner number 18395 Angola Prison.

Page 4 – St. Thomas Project is a violent neighborhood.

Page 5 – Poncelet is fed poorly and lives 23 hours a day in a 6 by 8 foot cell.

Page 6 – Poncelet had a dream once that he was being cooked by a guard.

Page 6 – Prejean likes to sing

Page 7 – Prejean is at the prison for the first time, has never visited before. Has never met Chaplain Farley before.

Page 7 – Farley states Poncelet was sentenced for shooting “. . . two children in the back of the head. Raped the girl and then stabbed her several times”

Page 8 – The inmates at Angola prison have not seen many females.

Page 9 – Poncelet claims St. Thomas is where black people kill each other often

Page 10, 12 & 13 –Poncelet is father to a 12 year old girl named Allie. The mother is in jail. Allie is with foster parents in Texas. Poncelet only saw Allie once when she was three years old.

Page 11 – Carl Vitello did the killing in Poncelet’s version of the murders. They were “loaded on downs, acid and booze when this happened.”

Page 12 – Poncelet has been in prison two times before. Second time was for assault.

Page 13 – Poncelet has studied every law book he could get his hands on.

Page 14 – Poncelet describes St. Thomas as violent, “because every nigger has a gun.” He also reveals that Angola is a long distance from New Orleans, “thanks for listening and making the long trip”.

Page 14 – Prejean beat a possum to death when she was eight years old. She still has bad dreams of a dead possum head.

Page 16 – Montoya had unsuccessfully tried to get a lawyer named Hilton Barber to represent Poncelet. Prejean will try to get the lawyer on board.

Page 17 – Poncelet has a chance at a life sentence instead of a death sentence.

Page 18 – Walter Delacroix aged 17, Hope Percy 18, were happy people killed by gun at close range. Four weeks before the murder, Ponclet and Vitello had been attacking victims at lovers' lanes. Ponclet had smirked when the jury announced his guilty sentence.

Page 19 – The State of Louisiana had for many years used Gruesome Gerite, their electric chair, to execute. However, the practice is ending and the next two executions will be lethal injections. Poncelet will be one of the new ones.

Page 21 – There have been cases where defense attorneys have lost cases due to being under prepared or drunk. These cases were not granted appeals.

Page 22 - The pardon board is made up of the Governor's appointees, so they most likely will not overturn the death sentence.

Page 23 – Poncelet's mom is a blubberer.

Page 24 – We learn the television crews have visited Lucille Poncelet.

Page 25 – Poncelet has sent people to his mother to get cigarettes and money before.

Page 26 – Lucille Poncelet knows the Bible story of Peter and the cocks crowing.

Page 27 – Lucille Poncelet's sons are being bullied in school.

Page 27 – Poncelet's dad got him drunk on whiskey in a bar when Poncelet was 12 years old.

Page 27 – Poncelet's dad was a hardworking sharecropper. He died when Matt was fourteen.

Page 28 – Prejean had been “drawn” to becoming a Nun.

Page 29 – Prejean has never experienced sexual intimacy.

Page 30 – Gilardi’s version of the murders accuses Poncelet of shooting Walter Delacriox twice in the back of his head, then raped Hope Percy and stabbed her 17 times before shooting . . .” her in the head twice.

Page 31 – Poncelet was smiling and chewing gum when he received his death sentence in court.

Page 32 – Prejean has learned that the pardon board members deflect guilt away from Governors.

Page 32 – Poncelet was told he can have the spiritual advisor of his choice.

Page 33 – Mr. Delacriox is a Catholic, so is his family and son.

Page 34 – Delacroix does not have any other children, his dead son was to be his legacy.

Page 37 – Delacroix reveals that his wife is no longer fun to be with. She donated their son’s clothes to Goodwill.

Page 38 – Walter had grown up in the house, his whole life, home was Slidell.

Page 40 – Poncelet and his cousin threw rocks at some black kids when they were young. The next day the black kids had ruined Poncelet’s bike.

Page 42 – While questioning the sources of Poncelet's racism, Prejean realizes that Poncelet has always hated lazy people.

Page 42 – Hope Percy was to join the Air Force the same day she was murdered.

Page 43 – The Percy and the Delacroix families were worried the morning of July 15th 1977 when their children didn't come home. They even thought perhaps the kids ran off and got married.

Page 43 – Three days after the deaths, a search party finally went looking. Five days after the deaths some kids found the belongs and gave to police. The bodies were found by the Police on the sixth day after the murders.

Page 44 – Marybeth Percy's brother, a dentist, had identified the body of Hope Percy.

Page 45 – Hope had a younger sister named Emily, now 16 years old.

Page 46 – Clyde Percy believes Poncelet is "scum" and "God's mistake".

Page 47 – The Percys had thought Prejean no longer supported Poncelet.

Page 48 – Poncelet reveals he has always been a member of the Aryan brotherhood. He believes the government is corrupt and should not have power.

Page 50 – Poncelet doesn't own a suit, Prejean needs to get one for him and make funeral arrangements.

Page 51 – Sisters of St. Joseph have burial plots

Page 52 – Victims Support group meetings are regular gatherings of parents who have lost their children.

Page 55 – The prison has an organized way in which the guards and sergeants conduct the death house.

Page 57 – Poncelet doesn't see Jesus as being a rebel.

Page 66 – Poncelet previously enjoyed getting a woman drunk in a bar then take to the woods to smoke weed and have sex.

Pages 55, 60 - Guard Trapp is the person responsible for strapping down the left leg of inmate. Nurse is the one who preps the lethal injections. She could possibly be the person that stick the needle in.

Page 66 – Prejean gets lonely on some Sunday afternoons when the family barbques happen in St. Thomas Projects.

Page 74 – Brother Mitch recalls Poncelet's charm.

Page 82 – The Chaplain doesn't trust Nuns to get the job done. He gets paid by the prison to work.

Page 86 – Poncelet's truth is revealed. On the murder night, he raped Hope, and killed Walter.

Analysis of Dialogue

There are references to pop culture, literary works and to historical figures throughout the play. This forces the audience to relate due to common experience. There are light hearted moments brought on by Prejean quotes W.C. Fields and the Chaplain quotes Jimmy Cagney. These references help the other character in the scene relate, but also helps the audience connect. Prejean herself finds a connection, a way to relate to the situation when she quotes Hemingway from *Big Two-Hearted River*, "Be a man my son" on page 85. The Sister Neal character, who is Prejean's inspiration for this journey, speaks real quotes from a lecture by Sr. Neal during the opening moments. Although unfamiliar to most audience members, it becomes clear that this person has had a major impact on Prejean. Another person of great impact on Prejean is Mahatma Gandhi. She speaks Gandhi's "If we were all to take an eye for an eye, the world would be blind" quote on page 96. This quote makes a lasting impression as it simply states Prejean's overall view of the death penalty. We learn she is an educated individual who has not only experienced life, but has retained lesson from it that she is able to pass onto others.

A great amount of the play is spent in prayer, singing hymns or quoting the bible. Due to the French catholic background of Louisiana this is to be expected. It helps root the play in religiosity and motivates conversations about life, death and afterwards. Prejean brings comfort to Poncelet when she quotes John 8, "You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free" (Robbins 68). The Biblical verses allow some characters to find strength during rough moments. Prejean carries a bible through out the play and reads Isaiah 43:2 just before Poncelet's taking of communion and execution. His family speak the Lord's prayer at the time of the execution in an effort to beg God to allow the soul to ascend although it has done wrong. It seems, as in real life, the characters in the play use the Bible to back up their opinions. They believe their convictions

are reasonable because their convictions are supported by the Bible. Sgt. Beliveau starts a biblical debate with Prejean using the “eye for an eye quote”. Sister Prejean confronts Sgt. Beliveau by saying, “You know something, the bible also calls for death as a punishment for adultery, prostitution, homosexuality, profaning the Sabbath, trespass upon sacred ground and contempt of parents” (Robbins 74).

There are references to animals throughout the text. This creates imagery that makes prison feel like cages and the prisoners are the caged animals. During his first monologue, Poncelet relates that he had a dream in which he had been fattened up and roasted like a sow. Prejean exclaims to Poncelet, “You’re coming off as a crazed animal, a Nazi terrorist mad dog, some one that’s not even human that deserves to die” (Robbins 49). Defense attorney Hilton Barber uses references to animals when trying to sway the pardon board with quotes; “We put him to death like an old horse” (Robbins 30) and “Please, let us not be complicit in the butchery of another human life” (Robbins 32). In an Act 1 monologue, Prejean shares with the audience about the time herself and some childhood friends killed an opossum. All these references to animals reinforce the call the to help the helpless.

Due to the wonders of the internet, students can find out how people sound in various regions. The cast will need to use YouTube and other websites to investigate how their character sounds. Since Sister Helen Prejean is an international public speaker there is plenty of opportunities for the cast to listen to speeches online. Her voice is warm and jovial, however it can sting when she makes a serious statement. Prejean’s word choices often have a poetic sense to them often times with great wit. She grew up in Baton Rouge from a wealthy family so her voice should sound southern, but not as thick a the Cajun accent that Matt Poncelet would have from growing up poor just outside of New Orleans. All the characters in the play come from the

south, however in huge aspect of this play is about economics. The poor need to sound less educated. Robbins has helped by choosing phrases that represent this. The well educated characters in the play speak with a more developed vocabulary therefore seem to be rich. Of course, deep down this play about everyone being equal. Prejean has chosen to live in the St. Thomas Projects, which is a slum according to Poncelet. Prejean can communicate with anyone because she has experienced life.

Capitol Punishment Process as Described by the Text

The following list is comprised of quotes and summaries of references made in the script regarding the death penalty. This play is educational and it is the director's duty to find a way to play this information so that the story also progresses. This information is important to get across. Tim Robbins wants the cast to educate the audience with these statements.

- "The State only goes after death in 1 out of 50 cases." (Robbins 16)
- "Costs two million to kill a man, half a mil to keep him in for life. State probably had a stronger case against Poncelet or Vitello had a better lawyer, was able to create doubt in the jury's mind." (Robbins 16)
- "There's no way he's going to get off. He was there. He was an accomplice and that's life. Life sentences in Louisiana are for real. We're trying to keep the state from killing him." (Robbins 17)
- "The way I see it I got two chances. The pardon board and a federal appeals court. I can write the motion and all, I just need someone to file it." (Robbins 13)
- "The legal system is a series of gates that shut like one-way turnstiles and you cant go back once you've come out. If the trial attorney does not raise an issue or make an objection during the trial, the higher courts say the defendant has waived his rights to raise the issue later on." (Robbins 21)
- "Politics did play a big part in this decision but the pardon board is not the place to bring this up." (Robbins 22)
- "We are filing appeals in Federal Court and the Supreme Court. But this is not the pardon board, don't mean a thing to them if you pulled the trigger or not. They are thinking of the crime and of you as the monster." (Robbins 23)

- “Got a call from the prison. Said if it goes down do I get the death insurance.” (Robbins 25)
- On page 29 Hilton Barber, Defense Attorney represents Matt Poncelet before the Pardon Board. It is a board that decides the inmate’s fate when appealing. Their decision will most likely be backed by the Governor. Guy Gilardi is the Assistant District Attorney who is arguing for the death of Poncelet.
- “It is the finding of this Board that clemency will be denied to Matthew Poncelet. Execution will be carried out as scheduled one week hence.” (Robbins 32)
- “We’ve still got a judge in the fifth circuit Federal Court that can stop it and beyond that there’s the U.S. Supreme Court and the Governor. I’ll get a private meeting with him if it’s the last thing I do.” (Robbins 32)
- “A lie detector test. It ain’t gonna change any of these guy’s minds, but I would like my mama to know the truth. I want her to know I didn’t kill those kids.” (Robbins 50)
- Death House at Angola Prison is 1.5 miles away from the nearest cellblock (Robbins 55).
- The executions take an emotional toll on the employees of the prison. (Robbins 56)
- Don’t allow drinks or food for the spiritual advisor at the death house. (Robbins 60)
- “...tomorrow is the day of your execution and you’re bound to be under stress and the test often mistakes stress for dishonesty” (Robbins 68)
- “Matt Poncelet had inadequate counsel, a court appointed lawyer with limited experience in trial law and none in defending a capital defendant.” (Robbins 69)
- p.64 Warden Hartman does not permit a hymn to be played at the execution
- “Poncelet, the Federal Appeals Court turned you down. I’m sorry.” (Robbins 81)

- Poncelet gets to call home about one hour before his death. (Robbins 84)
- Governor Fredericks is running for re-election. He is doing a big publicity campaigning surrounding his toughness on crime, which includes the executions. (Robbins 22)

Polar Attitudes

Note: All Page Numbers refer to the script *Dead Man Walking* by Tim Robbins. These are first lines and last lines for major characters. It gives some insight into the characters arc throughout the story.

Sister Helen Prejean

Dialogue Prejean:

“What am I getting myself into?” p. 8

“Shall we get to work?” p.97

Narrator Prejean:

“And we, we sisters of the Catholic Church, had an obligation to carry on that activism, that advocacy for the poor.” p. 2

“If we reconcile, do our memories of our loved ones fade or do we honor our loved ones with a wish for everlasting peace, a holy place without violence, hatred or revenge? Only time will tell.” P. 96

Matt Poncelet

“But I didn’t kill them. I didn’t kill anybody. I swear to God I didn’t.” p. 12

“I ask your forgiveness for what I’ve done. It was a terrible thing I done in taking your son away from you. . . . I hope my death gives you some relief.” p. 92

Colleen

“We’ll go see him tomorrow.” p. 15

“How’d we ever get involved with this stuff anyway?” p.61

Hilton Barber

“ . . . I’ll do my best.” p. 21

“Gotta go.” p. 73

Lucille Poncelet

“Sometimes I want to pretend I’m not his mother so people will leave me alone, not hate me. That’s terrible, huh?” p. 26

“If I had put my arms around my boy no guard could have got me to let go.” p. 79

Earl Delacroix

“Me call you? Think about that Sister. Think about how arrogant and self-righteous that is. Excuse me.” p. 34

“You made it. I’m glad you’re safe.” p. 97

Chaplain Farley

“Where is your habit?” p. 7

“I try to draw them closer to God in their final days.” p.83

Analysis of Dramatic Action Act 2

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ACT II

The death house. The look of these scenes is different than the previous scenes. PREJEAN enters with a guard, TRAPP.

Checking In

Prod, Informs, Excuses

PREJEAN: This is in the middle of nowhere.

TRAPP: Closest cellblock is a mile and a half away.

PREJEAN: Why?

TRAPP: Don't know, Sister. Security I bet. This is Sgt. Beliveau. He is the ranking officer at the death house.

BELIVEAU: Hello, Sister. We don't get a lot of female advisors here so bear with us as we figure it out. Chaplain Farley called. He's late. You can see Poncelet until he gets here.

PREJEAN: Thanks, Sgt. Beliveau.

BELIVEAU: Trapp'll take you to your man.

Questioning Role

Nudges, Unfolds

As TRAPP and PREJEAN walk.

PREJEAN: I saw you outside the gates the night of Purcell's execution.

TRAPP: Yes.

PREJEAN: You seemed upset.

TRAPP: Upset? No.

PREJEAN: Were you inside the room when they did it?

TRAPP: I'm on the strap down team. I'm on the left leg. That's my job, the left leg. We take the prisoner from his cell into the execution chamber.

PREJEAN: Wow. That's gotta be tough.

TRAPP: It was hard. I got home that night and couldn't sleep. Just sat in the chair all night.

PREJEAN: I think this thing must affect everybody that sees it, whether they're for it or against it.

TRAPP: Well, its part of the job, ma'am. These people get what's comin to 'em. Chaplain Farley should be here shortly. Have a seat, Sister.

New Place

Braggs, Enclaves

She does and MATT is waiting for her.

MATT: Like my new digs? I'm pretty special huh? Got this place all to myself. Got eight guys guarding me. One dude checks me every fifteen minutes to see if I've killed myself. Suicide watch. Never had so many people care about how I was doin'.

PREJEAN: When did you come out here?

MATT: Last night. Late. Didn't get a chance to say goodbye to the guys on the row. Most of them were sleeping. Did you get me that lie detector test?

PREJEAN: I made some calls. No luck yet.

MATT: So this is the end. The death house vacation. Three days of quiet. Plenty of time to read my bible, eh Sister? Look for a loophole.

PREJEAN: Did you read anything in that bible about Jesus?

MATT: Holy man, did good, in heaven, praise Jesus.

PREJEAN: There's passages in there about the suffering of Jesus when he was alone and facing death that you might find interesting.

MATT: Me and Jesus had a different way of dealing with things. He was one of those turn the other cheek guys.

PREJEAN: Takes a lot of strength to turn the other cheek, Matt. You say you like rebels. What do you think Jesus was?

MATT: He wasn't no rebel?

PREJEAN: Sure he was. He was a dangerous man.

MATT: What's so dangerous about love your brother?

PREJEAN: His love changed things, Matt. People that nobody cared about, prostitutes, beggars, the poor, finally had someone that respected them, loved them, made them part of a family, made them realize their own worth. In his eyes they had dignity and were becoming a social force, a threat to the established order and that made the guys at the top very nervous and so they went and arrested Jesus.

Who You Are

Badlyers, Reprimands

MATT: Kinda like me, huh?

PREJEAN: No, Matt. Not at all like you, not at all. He created a better world. He changed it with his love. You stood by and watched while two kids were killed.

Lights change. MATT disappears and FARLEY appears, tidying his desk as he talks.

FARLEY: It's very easy for someone to come in from outside and make a rash judgment on procedure. What may appear on the surface to be irrational or unnecessary proves upon examination to have solid reasoning and experience behind it.

PREJEAN: Father, I was asking to play a hymn on a cassette for Matt before his execution.

FARLEY: And experience tells us that music stirs up emotion, emotion that may produce an unexpected reaction in the inmate.

PREJEAN: Would you mind if I ask the warden for his opinion?

FARLEY: I would discourage it but you may, if you like.

PREJEAN: Well, thank you for your time Father.

She stands.

Lectures, Disputes

FARLEY: I understand you were protesting outside the gates during the last execution.

PREJEAN: Yes.

FARLEY: Are you familiar with the Old Testament. "Thou shalt not kill but if thou shed the blood of man by man shall your blood be shed"?

PREJEAN: Yes. But in the New Testament Jesus speaks of grace and reconciliation.

FARLEY: Reconciliation is achieved by accepting God's love.

Poncelet has to understand that Jesus died for his sins if his soul is to live an eternal life. The politics of the death penalty are not what's important here. I certainly hope you're not encouraging him to reject authority. Look at Romans "Let every person be subordinate to the higher authorities for there is no authority except from God and those who oppose it will bring judgment upon themselves."

Post Faint PREJEAN begins to sway and she faints. Black out. In
the darkness we hear:

Snubs

NURSE: What is it? What happened?

FARLEY: She collapsed in my office. I think it may be her heart.

BELIVEAU: She's having a heart attack.

PREJEAN: I'm OK. I think I just fainted.

BELIVEAU: You stay right there, young lady.

PREJEAN: I haven't eaten anything. I'm sure I'm OK. I told Matt I'd be back. Can you tell him what happened?

Lights fade up. PREJEAN on a bed flanked by the nurse and BELIVEAU.

NURSE: We'll do that when we're finished here.

PREJEAN: No. I gotta get word to him.

BELIVEAU: I'll take care of it, Sister.

NURSE: Well good news, this isn't a heart attack.

PREJEAN: I'm just hungry. They have this rule you're not allowed to eat in the death house. They must think we're ferns and can feed off the air.

Questioning Method

Investigate, Evades

A pause.

PREJEAN: Is this machine used after an execution?

NURSE: Yes, ma'am. We just have to be official about the whole thing. Thank god we're off the electric chair. Smell of burnt flesh and all. It's a little easier to take, the needle. Part of the job, you know. Let's get you up and get some food in your stomach.

PREJEAN: Who puts the needle in?

NURSE: That's private information.

PREJEAN: Is it you?

NURSE: We are not allowed to disclose any specifics regarding the execution procedure.

BELIVEAU: C'mon Sister, we'll get you a tray of food and then send you home.

PREJEAN: No, I've got to get back to Matt.

BELIVEAU: Sorry Sister, Warden's orders. You're through for the day.

The Suit

Rouses, Joins

Lights shift. COLLEEN holds a man's suit.

COLLEEN: Got this at Goodwill. I talked to Bishop Norwich. He said he would say the funeral mass. The leaders of the congregation have met and we can use one of our own burial plots.

I also found a funeral home willing to donate their services.

PREJEAN holds the suit.

COLLEEN: Guess who Matt Poncelet's going to be buried next to?

PREJEAN: Who was the last to die?

COLLEEN: Sister Celestine.

PREJEAN bursts out laughing.

PREJEAN: Oh, Lord.

COLLEEN: Remember when that sweet little girl came to the convent after her wedding to introduce her husband to us?

PREJEAN: And Celestine says, "I'm glad I don't have to share my bed with any man."

COLLEEN: She loved her celibacy so much.

PREJEAN: Now she'll have a man next to her forever.

They laugh. Then.

COLLEEN: How'd we ever get involved with this stuff anyway?

Going Home

Pontificates

Lights change. A hymn plays.

PREJEAN: Because of the length of the drive from Angola to New Orleans I packed a bag and drove to stay with my mother in Baton Rouge. Laying in my bed that night, staring at the ceiling I had stared at as a child. I thought of the folks in my

neighborhood that I had been neglecting. I thought of that fourteen-year-old boy that was shot and wondered if that bullet wound would be a change in his life or the badge of machismo that would lead to worse trouble. I wondered what the badge was with Matt.

From behind PREJEAN we see the parents of the slain.

Nightmare #1

Stipulate

CLYDE: Against the day of vengeance and requital, against the time they lose their footing? Close at hand is the day of their disaster and their doom is rushing upon them.

MARYBETH: Whoever strikes a man a mortal blow must be put to death.

Loving Judas *The lights change.*

Cultivates, Relinquishes

PREJEAN: Hilton called early in the morning.

HILTON: We've got ourselves a private meeting with the Governor. Now listen, from what I know of Governor Fredericks, he's a reluctant supporter of capital punishment. He has the power to save this man's life by commuting the sentence or granting a reprieve, the last vestige of the right of Kings. The trick on this is to appeal to him on a personal level without a lot of fanfare. That's why I've requested a private meeting. Meet me tonight at the State House in Baton Rouge, 7pm.

PREJEAN: It's a lost cause, Mama. I'm wasting my time.

MOTHER: With your criminal?

PREJEAN: There's so many people grieving. He's caused so much pain.

Pause.

MOTHER: Maybe you're looking for a way to love Judas, for a love so big that it takes in the evil.

Taunts

PREJEAN: I don't know if I can do it, Mama.

MOTHER: Annunciations are common. Incarnations are rare. You do your best, Helen, that's all God asks.

Fulfilling Function

Intimidates, Defends

We hear the sounds of a hymn through a small speaker. Lights change. PREJEAN talks with WARDEN HARTMAN, a short stocky man in his early 60s with a square face and a thick gray mustache. Conspicuously present on his desk is a small cassette player that plays the hymn PREJEAN wants to play for MATT.

HARTMAN: It's nice enough.

He turns the volume down. It continues to play softly.

HARTMAN: I've been hearing some disturbing things about you.

PREJEAN: Such as?

HARTMAN: That you're too emotionally involved with Matthew Poncelet and unable to fulfill your function as spiritual advisor.

PREJEAN: What gives you that idea?

HARTMAN: You fainted in the death house and caused a lot of commotion for my personnel.

PREJEAN: I fainted out of hunger not emotion.

HARTMAN: As warden one of my major responsibilities in this execution process is seeing to it that condemned inmates get good spiritual counsel and a chance to get straight with God before they die. This man Farley is perfectly capable of doing that.

PREJEAN: Matt doesn't trust Chaplain Farley and he has the right to choose his own spiritual counsel, doesn't he?

HARTMAN: Yes.

PREJEAN: It's guaranteed in the Constitution isn't it?

HARTMAN: Yes it is. But according to the Constitution we can bar a spiritual adviser from the death house if they are a threat to prison security.

PREJEAN: A threat?

HARTMAN: You were with some protestors outside the prison during the last execution.

PREJEAN: C'mon now, I was singing Kumbaya. You may not like having me around but you know I'm not a threat to prison security.

A pause

Pushes, Cautions

PREJEAN: Warden, this man is going to die tomorrow. Doesn't he have a right to some solace?

The hymn ends. There is a pause.

HARTMAN: The hymn is nice but it'll stir up emotion. I can't let you play it for Mr. Poncelet. As far as the other thing I don't want to get into a debate about the Constitution. You can continue to see him.

PREJEAN: Thank you.

HARTMAN: Is his family gonna be there tomorrow?

PREJEAN: Yes sir.

HARTMAN: It's important that they are there for him.

PREJEAN: And you, Warden, you'll be there too?

HARTMAN: Yes, ma'am, all day and all night.

A pause.

HARTMAN: Sister, no one is doing handstands about this execution. It comes with the job.

PREJEAN: The job. A consigned power to oblige the law, the will of the people. How one feels about what the job results in is irrelevant. The warden is absolved of personal responsibility because he is doing his job.

Catching Up Lights change. The death house.

Interrogates, Indulges

MATT: Where'd you go yesterday?

PREJEAN: They wouldn't let me come back in.

MATT: Are you all right?

PREJEAN: I'm fine. Just a lot of commotion for nothing.

MATT: I kept asking them here what happened but they wouldn't tell me nothing. I thought you had a heart attack. I thought I was gonna have to go through this by myself.

Guilt

PREJEAN: I'm sorry, Matt. I tried to get back. They wouldn't let me.

A pause.

PREJEAN: So the Marlboro man doesn't want to ride into the sunset all tough and alone.

No response.

MATT: When they took me away yesterday they wouldn't tell me why. Took me into a room. Started measuring me. Weighed me. I think they were trying to see how big a coffin I needed. When I got back you were gone. Spent all day alone.

Missing Life *A pause.*

Consoles, Values

MATT: You ever get lonely?

PREJEAN: Yeah. I do. Sometimes on Sunday afternoons when I smell the smoke in the neighborhood from family barbecues, hear those kids laughing, I sit there in my room and feel like a fool.

MATT: What I miss most being here are the women and just bein' in the bars and listenin' to music and dancin' till three or four in the morning. And I'm not going to lie to you, ma'am. I believed in doing it. Me and my lady friends we'd get us a blanket and a bottle or a little weed and go into the woods and do it.

PREJEAN: Well Matt. Let's face it. If I had a husband and a family, chances are I'd be with them this afternoon instead of visiting with you.

MATT: True. Glad you're here, ma'am.

MATT lights a cigarette.

PREJEAN: Those things'll kill you, you know.

MATT laughs. Then suddenly.

MATT: They're not going to break me. I just pray God holds up my legs tomorrow to make that last walk. It's the waiting, it's the countdown that gets you.

Business Talk

Plows, Admits

PREJEAN: We should know about the federal appeal real soon and Hilton and I have an appointment to see the Governor this evening.

MATT: The Governor. Fat chance in hell he'll do anything. Risk his political butt for me?

Pause.

MATT: I shouldn't have said all those things about Hitler and being a terrorist, all that stuff. It was stupid.

PREJEAN: Hartman told me there would be no more media interviews.

MATT: Just as well. Shut my stupid mouth up.

PREJEAN: I was able to arrange a polygraph for tomorrow morning.

MATT: Alright. Good news.

PREJEAN: Now the man that runs the polygraph test has serious doubts that they'll get an accurate reading of the truth.

MATT: Why?

PREJEAN: Because tomorrow is the day of your execution and you're bound to be under stress and the test often mistakes stress for dishonesty.

MATT: Not a problem. I'm home free.

Bible Study #2

Mollifies, Warns

PREJEAN: Have you been reading your bible?

MATT: I tried last night but reading makes me want to sleep. I'm trying to stay conscious as much as possible. Look, I appreciate all the efforts to save me but me and God have squared things away. I know Jesus died for us on the cross and will take care of me when I appear before God on judgment day.

PREJEAN: You know Matt. Redemption isn't some kind of free ticket admission that you get because Jesus paid the price. You need to participate in your own redemption. You've got some work to do. You may want to check out some words of Jesus that might have some meaning for you: "You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." It's in the Gospel of John, chapter 8.

MATT: I'll do that. I'll check it out. The truth will set you free. I like that. I pass that lie detector test and I'm home free.

PREJEAN: Matt, if you die, as your friend I want to help you to die with dignity and you can't do that, the way I see it, until you own up to the part you played in Walter and Hope's death.

As the lights change, PREJEAN walks to a table and sits next to HILTON BARBER. Lights flash.

Press Conference

*Charms, Defends
Pleads*

PREJEAN: Later that evening as we walked into our private meeting with Governor Fredericks we were bombarded with

flash bulbs and a coterie of press. The Governor had set up a dog and pony show and we were the stars.

A bright flash.

FREDERICKS: Now tomorrow, as you know, the State of Louisiana will put to death Matthew Poncelet and today I have invited a couple of people here to talk to us about this case. Who will go first?

Flash.

HILTON: Yes, well...uh...Matt Poncelet had inadequate counsel, a court appointed lawyer with limited experience in trial law and none in defending a capital defendant.

Flash.

PREJEAN: Try as Hilton might I don't think we were there to change anyone's minds but simply to show the press that this politician was listening to both sides and in a reasoned and measured way would remain tough on crime and uphold the law of Louisiana.

Flash.

FREDERICKS: But you must understand, I'm the Governor and represent the state and must carry out the laws and must submerge my own personal views to carry out the expressed will of the people. Yes, I'll look carefully at the case but unless there's some clear, striking evidence for innocence and gross miscarriage of justice I will not interfere in the process.

Many flashes. He moves to collect his paper.

PREJEAN: Governor.

He looks up at her.

PREJEAN: I am Matt Poncelet's spiritual adviser. If he dies, I will be with him. Please don't let this man die.

FREDERICKS, a deft politician, immediately looks concerned.

FREDERICKS: Can you do that? Can you watch that?

PREJEAN: I promised him, Governor.

FREDERICKS: I'll give the case careful consideration.

PREJEAN: You can spare him. You have the power to prevent this death.

FREDERICKS: I will look into the matter.

And he is gone. Amid the commotion,

HILTON: Let's not give up on the courts. We still might hit pay dirt with one of the legal issues.

Governor Reflection

Asserts

PREJEAN: I realize the governor, like other politicians, has found a moral niche in this process, a position from which he can make decisions and still lay his head on the pillow at night and go to sleep. He subordinates his conscience to the will of the people. If it is the law it must be right. The governor is not personally responsible if he simply "does his job" within the law.

PREJEAN walks to her bed in her mother's house and lies down. MOTHER, FARLEY, WALTER, HOPE and MATT appear behind her as she lies down.

Nightmare #2

Search, Wonders, Comfort

WALTER: What song is number one? What is the popular song now?

MATT: I am contemptible, loathsome to my neighbors.

HOPE: Do our friends remember us?

MATT: To my friends a thing of fear.

HOPE: Does anyone cry?

MATT: I am forgotten.

HOPE: Or are we forgotten?

MATT: As good as dead in their hearts, something discarded.

WALTER: Is he sorry?

MATT: As they combine against me, plotting to take my life.

HOPE: Deliver us from evil.

MATT: But I put my trust in you, Yahweh.

MOTHER: Helen, you're looking for a way to love Judas.

FARLEY: A man is going to die in front of you tomorrow.

MOTHER: Follow your heart and your faith. Annunciations are common. Incarnations are rare.

8:00-am

Proffers, Disturbs

PREJEAN: I didn't sleep that night.

PREJEAN stands and walks to the death house set. A digital clock reads 8am.

MATT: I didn't sleep last night. I wouldn't take that nerve medicine they tried to give me. I'm looking death in the eyes. I'm getting ready to go.

MATT looks down.

PREJEAN: Listen, Matt. I want you to know that I respect your need for privacy. If you prefer to be alone or just with your family today I won't be offended.

MATT: You should be here ma'am, if it won't put you out too much. I'm gonna want someone to talk to and be with right up to the end.

MATT shivers, starts.

MATT: If only I knew I'd die right away when I get the first shot. Will I feel it? The lungs go first. Like a fast choke. That's gotta hurt. They say the body doesn't move, doesn't shake. My poor mama...

PREJEAN: A couple of hours passed. Vast expanses of silence. Each quiet moment I felt I was failing him. I talked about trivial things, anything to keep the silence away. The polygraph operator arrived at 10:30.

MATT moves upstage and sits at a table with the polygraph operator.

Hope House Lesson

Presents

COLLEEN: Some, driven frantic by their sins, made miserable by their own guilt and finding all food repugnant, were nearly at death's door. Then they called to Yahweh in their trouble and he

rescued them from their suffering, he snatched them from the pit...

Lawyer Check in

Rummages, Inspires

PREJEAN on the phone. MATT is taking the polygraph test. We do not hear the questions and answers.

PREJEAN: Any word from the fifth circuit?

HILTON appears, phone in hand.

HILTON: None yet. A good sign. They've had it a good while now and maybe that means they see something substantive in the petition. I gotta go.

PREJEAN: Alright Hilton.

Beliveau Biblical Debate

Belittles, Contests

BELIVEAU sits at his desk.

BELIVEAU: Tell me something, Sister. What's a nun doing in a place like this? Shouldn't you be teaching children? Do you know what this man has done, the kids he killed?

PREJEAN: What he was involved in was evil. I don't condone it. I just don't see much sense in doing the same to him. Killing people who kill people to show that killing is wrong...

BELIVEAU: You know the bible says an eye for an eye...

PREJEAN: And you know that Jesus called for us to go beyond that kind of vengeance, not to pay back an eye for an eye, not to return hate for hate.

BELIVEAU holds up his hands.

BELIVEAU: I ain't gonna get into all this bible quotin' with a nun cuz I'm gonna lose.

They laugh.

PREJEAN: You know something, the bible also calls for death as a punishment for adultery, prostitution, homosexuality, profaning the Sabbath, trespass upon sacred ground and contempt of parents.

BELIVEAU: Really?

PREJEAN: Yes.

A pause.

BELIVEAU: Prostitution, you sure?

PREJEAN: Sure.

Lights shift.
Family Time

Tenses, Brags, Evades

PREJEAN: Another hour passed and Matt's family arrived. The welcome sound of laughter fell on the death house.

MATT is seated at a distance from his mother LUCILLE and her three sons. MITCH, TROY and JIM are sitting in folding metal chairs by the white metal door. MITCH and TROY sit closest to the door. LUCILLE and JIM sit behind. They are handsome, healthy-looking kids. MITCH, 18, the oldest, is the one keeping conversation going.

MITCH: She was only on the phone a few minutes and there she was falling for the ole Matt charm. I had to take back that phone. Trying to steal my gal, you dog.

MATT laughs. PREJEAN pulls up a chair and looks at her watch. Clock reads 2:15.

MATT: She sounds like a great little lady.

JIM: She ain't so little.

MATT: You take care of her, Mitch. Don't do nothing stupid.

MITCH: She looks a little like, what was that girlfriend you had in high school?

MATT: I had a lot of girls in high school.

MITCH: The one with the funny name.

MATT: Funny name?

MITCH: Maddie or Maldy or...

MATT: Madrigal.

MITCH: Madrigal Parmelee! That's it ... She was hot.

MATT: She was a nasty one, boy.

LUCILLE: Matthew!

MATT: Sorry, Mama. Madrigal was a fine upstanding young woman.

Troy's Tent MITCH laughs.

Dodges, Broadcast, Taunt

MATT: So what about you, Troy. You got a 'lil girlfriend?

TROY is 10 years old. His ears and the sides of his cheeks and neck turn pink.

TROY: I don't have time for girls, too much fishing and camping to do.

LUCILLE: Troy just got a new tent.

MATT: What kind of tent you got?

TROY: Army tent. I don't like those sissy tents with all them colors.

JIM: Tell Matt about the other night in the backyard.

The others laugh.

MITCH: Camping in the backyard.

LUCILLE: I made him come in. I was worried. I went out there and made him come into the house.

JIM: Tell him.

TROY: Me and my buddy Paul put up the tent and cooked our own dinner. We roasted these potatoes in tin foil on the fire and cooked us some weenies.

JIM: Then what happened?

TROY: Shut up.

JIM: Tell him.

TROY: About midnight we hear some kind of animal walkin' around and makin' noises – a strange animal. It was big and nasty.

Everyone laughs.

MATT: Which is it? Did you come inside because of mama or because you was wiggled out?

MITCH taps TROY on the shoulder.

MITCH: Tell the truth now, tell the truth.

TROY is shifting from foot to foot. He finally smiles. Everyone laughs. After the laugh a silence, a long, interminable silence.

LUCILLE: Some people been asking me about your funeral. I get real angry and tell them "He's not dead."

Another silence.

Wrapping Up

Stops, Shields, Suffers

PREJEAN: Another hour passed. Interminable silence followed by recollections, family snapshots from a time of less trouble and heartache. Memories that momentarily lifted the dark cloud that hung over this room.

Suddenly a clang and WARDEN HARTMAN appears at the door.

HARTMAN: I'm sorry, folks. We're going to have to wrap this up.

MATT: Already? Isn't it kind of early? Rules say they can stay until 6:45.

HARTMAN: It's time for you folks to be leaving now.

MATT stands up.

MATT: Listen, I put my stuff in two pillowcases and I'd feel

better if you guys took it home with you now. I don't want the prison sending it.

The GUARD on watch at the end of the tier moves to get the white bags.

GUARD: Step back to the wall.

MATT does as he is told as the GUARD opens the door. He gathers the bags and hands them to CAPTAIN BELIVEAU.

MATT: Mitch, you all can see about dividin' it up. Except my boots from Marion. I'm gonna walk to the execution in these here boots. No cryin' now. I don't want no cryin'. I'm not telling ya'll good-bye yet. I'll call you tonight.

LUCILLE moves to hug MATT but the guards flanking him cut her off.

PREJEAN: Can't she hug him?

WARDEN: I'm sorry ma'am, security.

MITCH: See ya, man. Stay strong.

There is a crack in his voice when he says "strong." JIM and TROY are beginning to walk out. TROY'S face is beginning to crumble into tears. MITCH and LUCILLE are moving towards the foyer. LUCILLE keeps jabbing a Kleenex to her eyes.

LUCILLE: We love you, Mattie.

MATT: No cryin'. I'll call you tonight. I'll call you.

PREJEAN puts her arm around LUCILLE and walks her to the front door.

LUCILLE: If I had put my arms around my boy no guard could have got me to let go.

Lights fade on LUCILLE and the boys as LUCILLE collapses in grief. MATT not seeing this calls out:

MATT: Is my mama doin' ok?

PREJEAN: Yes, Matt.

Last Supper

Stumbles, Enjoys

MUSIC: Faces of executed men. Victims of violence.

PREJEAN: The next hour was the longest hour I've ever experienced. Not a word was said, the silence making each moment linger. Every second was a second less for Matt, and I wanted desperately to talk but nothing came....until the meal, the last meal.

MATT eats his food. PREJEAN looks down at her food. It is darkening outside.

MATT: Never had shrimp before. They pretty good.

Results are in

A pause.

Brazen out, Rebuffs

MATT: So what's the word on the lie detector test?

PREJEAN: Culp said your answers showed stress, just as he had predicted. He said the results were inconclusive.

MATT: Man! Is the dude sure? Is he absolutely positively sure? I felt cool answering all them questions. Man! I can't believe I failed that test.

PREJEAN: Matt, you'd have to be a robot or insane not to feel stress now.

A pause.

MATT: Man! I just can't believe that test didn't come out right.

Truth Almost Comes Out

Incentivizes, Deflects

PREJEAN: Let's talk about what happened. Let's talk about that night.

MATT: I don't want to talk about that. I'm pissed off. I'm pissed at those kids for being parked out in the woods. I'm pissed that their parents are coming to watch me die. I'm pissed at myself for letting Vitello get over on them kids. But I got my last words coming. And I got a thing or two to say to the Percys and Delacroixs.

PREJEAN: Do you want your last words to be words of hatred?

MATT: Clyde Percy said he wants to inject me himself.

PREJEAN: Well think about how angry he must be. He's never gonna see his daughter again. He's never gonna love her, laugh with her. You've robbed these parents of so much, Matt. They've got nothing in their lives but sorrow, no joy. That's what you have given them. What possessed you to be in the woods that night?

MATT: I told ya, I was stoned outta my head.

PREJEAN: Now don't blame the drugs, Matt. You'd been harassing couples for weeks before this happened. Months! What was it?

MATT: What do you mean?

PREJEAN: What was it? Did you look up to Vitello? Did you think he was cool? Did you want to impress him?

MATT: I don't know.

PREJEAN: You could've just walked away.

MATT: He went psycho on me.

PREJEAN: Stop blaming him. You blame him. You blame the government. You blame the drugs. You blame blacks. You blame the Percys. You blame the kids for being there. What about Matthew Poncelet? Where is he in this story? Just an innocent? Just a victim?

MATT: I ain't no victim.

Interruption **MATT** gives her an intense, hard look. The phone rings. *Apologizes, Orders*
CAPTAIN BELIVEAU answers it. His conversation is brief. He says something to **WARDEN HARTMAN**.
HARTMAN nods his head and walks out of the room.
BELIVEAU looks through the grate at **PREJEAN** and shakes his head, no. **WARDEN HARTMAN** appears and says, matter-of-factly:

HARTMAN: Poncelet, the Federal Appeals Court turned you down. I'm sorry.

BELIVEAU appears at the door.

BELIVEAU: Sister, please step into the corridor.

PREJEAN: I'll be right outside.

MATT gets up and walks to the phone. MATT answers the phone, listens, then

MATT: Thank you, Mr. Hilton. Thank you for what you and all the others done for me. I got you too late. If I had had you sooner....(silence)...no, Mr. Hilton. NO, you didn't fail. I appreciate everything you and the others have done for me. I shoulda got you sooner. No, you didn't fail. The justice system in this country failed. It stinks. It stinks bad.

*Duty**Portends, Wrestles*

PREJEAN stands to the side. CHAPLAIN FARLEY approaches her.

FARLEY: Sister, I will be administering communion to Poncelet before he makes his final walk.

PREJEAN: He has asked me to receive it for the both of us.

FARLEY: Well, that's unfortunate.

PREJEAN: Pardon?

FARLEY: You have been unable to provide enough spiritual guidance to this man as is evidenced in the fact that he will leave this earth without receiving the sacred sacrament of communion.

PREJEAN: Chaplain Farley, how are you at peace with what you do?

FARLEY: Excuse me?

PREJEAN: You take a salary from an institution that takes human life. How can you reconcile that with the teachings of Jesus Christ?

FARLEY: I take a small salary to provide spiritual counsel to people who need it. I try to draw them closer to God in their final days. I do not encourage them, as I assume you do, to reject the authority that leads them to this fate.

CAPTAIN BELIVEAU approaches.

BELIVEAU: Sister, you can go back to the cell now. Rescues

PREJEAN: Father.

10:30 pm She turns and walks with BELIVEAU.

Captivates, sifts

CLOCK reads 10:30pm. MATT comes back to the metal chair. His left pant leg has been cut off at the knee.

MATT: They shaved the calf of my leg.

He holds out his leg for her to see. There is a tattooed number.

PREJEAN: Why?

MATT: I guess they was worried they won't find a vein in my arm.

PREJEAN: What's that number?

MATT: That's when I was at Marion. In case anybody killed me. I wanted them to be able to identify my body.

He is wearing a clean white t-shirt. He is no longer wearing his long-sleeved denim shirt. She sees for the first time that his arms are covered in tattoos. He lowers his eyes, not wanting to look at her.

PREJEAN: Did it hurt when you did all those?

MATT: No. You're gonna think I'm a bad person, seeing all these tattoos.

He is very embarrassed. There is a swastika and a skull, women's names and on one arm a naked woman.

PREJEAN: Nah. You just have more color on you than I thought.

A pause.

MATT: They tried to give me two shots. I wouldn't let 'em. Tried to give me a sedative and an antihistamine.

PREJEAN: An antihistamine?

MATT: Said in case I have an allergic reaction to the first shot that knocks me out. Could get messy.

A GUARD brings in a telephone and sets it next to MATT.

MATT: Time to call home.

PREJEAN gets up to leave.

MATT: Will you stay?

PREJEAN: I'll stay. I'll just give you some privacy.

She stands by the door. As MATT makes his phone call the lights fade up to reveal the last minute preparations for the execution. The building is buzzing now. Guards are everywhere and men in three-piece suits. A secretary has arrived and has begun typing. You can hear the

Setting-up Death

Teaches & ~~shows~~

click, click, click of the typewriter. It sounds like a business office.

PREJEAN: "Be a man my son." The line from Hemingway, "Big two-hearted river" wells up in my mind, the words of the priest to Sam Cardinella who loses control of his anal sphincter muscle on the way to the gallows. As if one could be brave by simply willing it. I wonder what kind of dignity I could muster if I were facing my execution.

System Shock **PREJEAN** whispers to **BELIVEAU**.

Explains, Pleads

PREJEAN: What's she typing?

BELIVEAU: Forms for the witnesses to sign.

*The cold, preordained cruelty of it all hits her.
PREJEAN puts both hands against the tiled wall,
puts her head down and prays.*

PREJEAN: Oh, Jesus. God help me. I'm so scared. This is a terrifying place, God. So cold, so calculated, this death. Just don't let him fall apart, God. Please help him. Help me, Jesus.

A white tablecloth has been put on a table and ballpoint pens have been placed in the center of the table. MATT is crying, sobbing. He hangs up the phone, blows his nose and quickly regains his composure.

Mama Says

Enlightens, Listens

MATT: I just let it flow. I told my mama that I loved her. I talked to each of the boys. I hated to say good-bye. I told them that if I get a chance I'll call 'em back right before I go.

There is a pause. MATT breaks down. He begins to sob.

PREJEAN: What is it, Matt?

MATT: My mother said, "It was that Vitello. I'll always regret that you got involved with him." And I didn't want her to think that. Something you said. I could have walked away. But I didn't. I let myself listen to him. I was a victim, a fuckin' chicken. He was older, tough as hell. I was all boozed up, trying to be as tough as him. I didn't have the guts to stand up to him. I told my mother I was yellow goin' along with him. I didn't stand up to him. My mother kept saying, "No, Matt. It wasn't you. It wasn't you."

He sobs. Long beat.

The Confession **PREJEAN:** Your mama loves you, Matt.

Comes Clean, Support

MATT: That boy, Walter...

PREJEAN: Yeah, what Matt?

MATT: I killed him.

PREJEAN: And Hope?

MATT: No, ma'am.

PREJEAN: Did you rape her?

MATT: Yes, ma'am.

A pause.

MATT: Last night when they dimmed the lights on the tier I kneeled down by my bunk and prayed for them kids. I never done that before.

The silence is heavy. PREJEAN stands up and puts her hands against the metal screen door, getting as close to him as possible.

PREJEAN: Oh, Matt. There are spaces of sorrow that only God can touch. You did a terrible thing, Matt, a terrible thing. But you have a dignity now and no one can take that from you. You are a son of God, Matthew Poncelet.

Relief

Enlightens, Admits to

MATT: Ain't nobody never called me no son of God before. *(smiling)* I've been called a son-of-a-you-know-what lots of times but never no son of God. I just hope my death gives their parents some relief. I really do.

PREJEAN: Maybe that's the best thing you can offer the Delacroixs and the Percys, a wish for their peace.

Love

A pause.

Reveals to, Cares for

MATT: You know I've never known real love, never loved women or anybody all that well myself. Figures I'd have to go to my death to find love.

He looks directly at PREJEAN.

MATT: Thank you for loving me.

They can hear the front door opening and closing over and over. The witnesses and press are arriving.

MATT: Getting busy around here.

PREJEAN looks at the clock – 11:30pm.

MATT: Look at the time, it's flying.

PREJEAN is terrified. She puts her trembling fingers to her mouth and grabs hold of the crucifix around her neck. He pulls a cigarette from the pack in his shirt pocket and notices that there are just a few left.

MATT: Ought to just about make it.

He shivers.

MATT: It's cold in here.

PREJEAN: Can somebody get him a shirt. He's cold.

The Song

Beeseechs, Slights

MATT: What happened to that song you were going to play me?

PREJEAN: The hymn.

MATT: Yeah, that.

PREJEAN: They have rules forbidding music in the prison.

MATT: Yeah.

PREJEAN: They won't let me play it.

MATT: You can sing it. You know the words?

PREJEAN: I can't sing.

MATT: That's okay. C'mon on.

Convinces, Indulges

There is a pause and then PREJEAN begins singing, "Be Not Afraid" softly at first. MATT listens at first amused and then gradually more and more moved.

PREJEAN: If you cross the barren desert, you shall not die of thirst. Be not afraid. I go before you always if you stand before the fires of hell and death is at your side, be not afraid.

As she finishes MATT has a tear in his eye.

MATT: Thank you.

Dead Man Walking *A team of GUARDS comes into the cell.*

Beys, Empowers

GUARD: Sister, please step outside.

PREJEAN: Why?

GUARD: Sister, please.

Lights out. In the darkness,

MATT: Give me back my boots. I want my boots. A grown man and I have to leave this world with a diaper on, walking in slippers. I'll be free from all this. No more cells, no more bars, no more life in a cage.

Lights up. PREJEAN stands outside the cell.

HARTMAN: Time to go, Poncelet.

As he begins to walk, MATT'S legs sag and he drops to one knee beside the chair. He looks up at PREJEAN.

MATT: Sister Helen, I'm going to die.

Suffers

PREJEAN: But you know the truth now, Matt, and the truth has set you free.

MATT: God knows the truth about me. I'm going to a better place. I'm not worried at all.

But he is shivering and the guard comes and puts his denim jacket around his shoulders. The witnesses, the press, prison official each take a metal chair and form

two rows, facing the audience. We see EARL DELACROIX and the PERCYS.

MATT: Are you okay?

PREJEAN: Yeah, Matt. I'm OK. Christ is here. Look, I want the last thing you see in this world to be a face of love. Look at me. When they do this, look at me. I will be the face of Christ for you.

MATT: Yes, ma'am.

HARTMAN: Let's go.

PREJEAN puts her hand on his shoulder. They walk. The chains scrape across the floor. A GUARD shouts:

GUARD: Dead Man Walking.

Bible Study #3

Exhorts, Requests

PREJEAN carrying her bible reads Isaiah 43:2. As she reads the words she looks up and sees that MATT is walking with the same jaunty little walk, up on the balls of his feet.

PREJEAN: Do not be afraid I have called you by your name, you are mine. Should you pass through the sea I will be with you. Should you walk through the fire you will not be scorched and the flames will not burn you.

CHAPLAIN FARLEY raises his hand in blessing. They stop.

BELIVEAU: That's as far as you go, Sister.

MATT: Sister, will you look in on my mama from time to time?

PREJEAN: You have my word on that.

PREJEAN leans toward MATT and kisses him on the back. The guards guide PREJEAN to a chair with the other witnesses. There is a gurney, gleaming in the bright, fluorescent lights. MATT is strapped in the gurney. We see Matt's mother, LUCILLE, in the distance weeping, her boys watching television. HOPE and WALTER appear.

Nightmare #3

Sermonize, Begs, Reconcile

HOPE: If someone lies in wait for his neighbor out of hatred for him and rising up against him, strikes him mortally and then takes refuge in one of the cities...

WALTER: ...the elders of his own city shall send for him and have him taken from there and shall hand him over to be slain by the avenger of blood.

LUCILLE: Have mercy on me, Oh God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of sin cleanse me.

MATT: For I acknowledge my offense and my sin is before me always.

CLYDE: Do not look on him with pity but purge from Israel the stain of shedding innocent blood that you may prosper.

LUCILLE: Cleanse me of my sin with Hyssop, that I may be purified. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Begging Forgiveness

Admits, Declares

WARDEN: Any last words, Poncelet?

MATT: Yes Sir, I do. Mr. Delacroix, I don't want to leave this world with any hate in my heart. I ask your forgiveness for

what I've done. It was a terrible thing I done in taking your son away from you.

CLYDE: How about us?

MATT: Mr. and Mrs. Percy. I hope my death gives you some relief. I just want to say I think killing is wrong, no matter who does it. Whether it's me or y'all or your government.

*The gurney adjusts. The NURSE checks the needles.
The WARDEN nods to the executioner. A switch is
flipped.*

MATT (to Helen): I love you.

HELEN (to Matt): I love you.

That Night Revisited *Scores, Pleads*

A click is heard. There will be three clicks, each starting a needle. Each taking about 45 seconds. The process is slow and anesthetized but for half of it MATT is in terror but speaks in a monotone reliving the scenes of the murder.

MATT: Excuse me, what are you doing?

WALTER: Oh my God.

MATT: This is private property. Y'all are trespassing.

WALTER: We didn't know.

MATT: Get out of the car.

CLYDE: The next morning we waited for Hope to come *Relives*
through her bedroom door. The big day. Our baby was leaving home.

LUCILLE: It's happening. They're doing it. Boys, come to _____ *Notify*
me.

MARYBETH: I called the Delacroixs. It was strange she didn't call. She would always telephone and tell me where she was.

WALTER: Put down that gun and fight me like a man, you chicken shit asshole.

MATT: Kneel down.

HOPE: Please no.

MATT: If you don't do what we say we're going to shoot you.
So kneel down.

WALTER: Put down your gun. I'll take you both on. _____ *Instigates*

MATT: If you don't kneel down we're gonna shoot you. _____ *Harasses*

HOPE: Walter, kneel down, please, kneel down. Do it now! I don't want to die.

*After a moment WALTER complies, joining his girlfriend.
A beat. Then: gunshots.*

PREJEAN: A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast _____ *Prays*
spirit renew within me.

MARYBETH: Against the day of vengeance and requital
against the time they lose their footing? Close at hand is the
day of their disaster and their doom is rushing upon them.

TROY: Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. _____ *Prays*

PREJEAN: And Peter came up to him and said "Lord, how Proselytizes often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times."

DELACROIX: Whoever strikes a man a mortal blow must be Demande put to death.

PREJEAN: And Jesus said to him, "I do not say to thee seven times, but seventy times seven."

HOPE: You shall give life for life, eye for eye and tooth for tooth.

MOTHER: You have heard that it was said: "an eye for an eye" Reminds and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you to resist the evilness, on the contrary, if someone strikes thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

WALTER: ..foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

PREJEAN: ..take no revenge and cherish no grudge against your fellow countrymen. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. I am the lord.

MATT is not moving now. The lights shift to feature his mother surrounded by her sons who say the Our Father.
Family Prayer Pray For, Testify, Dies

LUCILLE AND BOYS: Our father who art in heaven hal-
 lowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on
 earth as it is in heaven

DELACROIX: When you lose a child all the memories get
 sealed like a shrine.

LUCILLE AND BOYS: ...and forgive us our trespasses as we
forgive those that trespass against us for thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory, Oh Lord.

Dead Silence

Collapses

Silence.

The Big Lesson

Edifies

The body is basically still, a slight reflex in the leg, then the eyes open. MATT is dead. HARTMAN motions to the DOCTOR to approach the body. The DOCTOR who has been sitting with the witnesses goes to the body in the gurney and puts his hand over MATT'S eyes, closing them. The DOCTOR puts his stethoscope against the heart, listens; then turns to the WARDEN and nods his head. As PREJEAN talks the people move offstage. COLLEEN comes to PREJEAN and leads her stage left.

PREJEAN: We aren't made to look at our retribution. We don't——*Scrutinizes*
see the dying man in the execution chamber. We don't see the
dying man on the battlefield. We are kept from the face of retri-
bution. It is a concept, carried out at midnight, far away, unseen.
Is death removed from our view because it is unacceptable? Is
there a compassion in our hearts that is uncomfortable with see-
ing death? Can we look at the death of a human being with cold
detachment, with indifference? And yet his act, his violent act
revisits the Percys and the Delacroixs nightly. And sometimes at
night in a dream I come back to his face, wild, torn and without
reason or compassion or any of the calming signs we seek day——*Pontificate,*
to day in our companions. I come back to his face and in this
dream, his face is unrepentant, his eyes violent and dead, his
hand holding a bloody knife. I hear the moaning of a dying per-
son. Matt has just attacked someone I know, someone I love,
the fireplace of my childhood home is stained with blood and in
my hand I hold a weapon. Will I raise the weapon up to him.

A knock on the door. HERBIE is there.

HERBIE: Sister Helen. There was a box for you at Hope House. (Pause) Some of the kids made you a card....to feel better soon. (Pause) That's all.

PREJEAN: Thanks, Herbie.

HERBIE: Could I ... can you help tutor me? You know, get rid of some of the red marks?

PREJEAN: Oh yes, it would be my honor. Your mother OK with that?

HERBIE: Yeah. She'll get over it.

He leaves.

*Peace**Kindles*

PREJEAN: Mahatma Gandhi once said: "If we were all to take an eye for an eye, the world would be blind." Jesus Christ showed us that the only way to stop the mad circle of violence and retribution was through love and reconciliation.

PREJEAN opens a box. It is MATT'S personal effects. She takes the boots out and sets them on the floor. Then, a bible. A hymn plays, redemptive, uplifting.

PREJEAN: ...Love for everyone, even those that inflict pain. For the family of a victim this is an emotion that seems unattainable, impossible. But perhaps there is redemption in reconciliation. Perhaps there is some peace in not letting the hatred overtake you, in not letting those that have hurt you continue to after they're gone. If we reconcile, do our memories of our loved ones fade or do we honor our loved ones with a wish for everlasting peace, a holy place without violence, hatred or revenge? Only time will tell. A week after we buried Matt, Mr. Delacroix asked me to meet him at a chapel near where the murders happened.

*PREJEAN sits. Behind her, in walks EARL DELACROIX.
He approaches slowly and sits next to PREJEAN.*

DELACROIX: You made it. I'm glad you're safe. You know these highways.

PREJEAN: It's good to see you, Mr. Delacroix.

DELACROIX: Earl.

PREJEAN smiles.

PREJEAN: Shall we get to work?

DELACROIX: Yes. Ma'am, let's do that.

*They both kneel and begin to pray. The hymn ends.
Silence.*

THE END

Summary of Units Act 2

- Unit 1 Checking In p.55
Prejean prods Trapp & Beliveau
Trapp answers Prejean, Beliveau makes excuses
- Unit 2 Questioning Role p.55
Prejean nudges Trapp, Trapp unfolds to Prejean
- Unit 3 New Place p.56
Poncelet brags to Prejean, Prejean endures Poncelet
- Unit 4 Bible Study #1 p.57
Prejean edifies Poncelet, Poncelet denigrates Prejean
- Unit 5 Who You Are p.57
Poncelet badgers Prejean, Prejean reprimands Poncelet
- Unit 6 Father's Permission p. 58
Farley overwhelms Prejean, Prejean deflects Farley
Farley lectures Prejean, Prejean disputes Farley
- Unit 7 Post Faint p.59
Prejean snubs everyone's concerns
- Unit 8 Questioning Method p.60
Prejean investigates Nurse, Nurse evades Prejean
- Unit 9 The Suit p.60
Colleen rouses Prejean, Prejean joins Colleen
- Unit 10 Going Home p.61
Prejean pontificates

Character Analysis of Main Characters

Sister Helen Prejean

Sister Helen Prejean believes she must help Poncelet get to Heaven. He has her convinced that he needs her help in getting a lawyer. She questions the innocence/guilt of Poncelet through out the whole play. This has the audience guessing too. She knows he needs to come to terms with God, and his time is running out. Prejean sacrifices through out the entire play. Her heart and duty are with the kids of Hope House, but Prejean is even willing to sacrifice that for a while in order to rescue Poncelet's soul. That's devotion. She also travels far for him. New Orleans to Angola State Penitentiary is about a four hour drive each direction. Sometimes she stops on the way back at Baton Rouge, which is the half way point. She stays the night in her childhood bedroom. Her mother calms her or interrogates her, it's similar to the relationship Prejean has with Poncelet, but reversed. Her father was a good lawyer in Baton Rouge, which is the State Capitol. She grew up in affluent environment and now enjoys being immersed in the public housing development of St. Thomas Projects. Her fellow sisters of St. Joseph have started Hope House, an organization that still exists today. Prejean not only follows the words of the Lord, but she demonstrates it through her actions, words and thoughts. There is a moment in Act II where Prejean tells Poncelet that he doesn't compare to Jesus because Jesus helped people. We realize it is Prejean that it is the Christ figure of this morality tale. "Because you a nun and wear a cross around your neck?" (Robbins 27).

The autobiography by Sister Helen Prejean gives more insight into her character's thoughts and beliefs. She knows God has entrusted humans to "right their wrongs and comfort the suffering" (Prejean 11). The following statements show us how she thinks;

- "In some mysterious way my living and working in St. Thomas is paring me down to

essentials and liberating my spirit. Even living without air conditioning is good for me. Intense heat slows you down. You choose essential tasks. You become grateful for small breezes and seek the company of trees. You appreciate a cool bath, ice water. Simple things. Good things. And for the first time in my life I have the opportunity to enjoy the friendship of black people. I realize how deprived my life was in the all-white-just-like-me social circles I used to frequent.” (Prejean 10)

- “I am reading people like Gandhi, Alice Walker, Albert Camus, Dorothy Day, and Martin Luther King, and even the way I pray is changing. Before, I had asked God to right the wrongs and comfort the suffering. Now I know – really know – that God entrusts those tasks to us.” (Prejean 11)

We learn in the final pages of the script the moral fiber behind Prejean. She says, “Jesus Christ showed us that the only way to stop the mad circle of violence and retribution was through love and reconciliation. . . . Love for everyone, even those that inflict pain.” (Robbins 96)

Matt Poncelet

Matt Poncelet, Prisoner 18375 at Angola Prison’s Death Row (Robbins 4)

Matt Poncelet is scary. There are times when he is creepy. These moments tighten the tension. Most of the beginning of his character’s journey includes trying to convince a nun and a lawyer that he is indeed innocent. He tells people that the other guy, Vitello, committed the crimes. Poncelet tells people that he was scared of Vitello too and that’s why he didn’t stop the crimes in progress nor turn in Vitello to the cops. When an observer learns that Poncelet is indeed guilty by his own admission, there is a catharsis. We want him to be a falsely accused victim, we want him to be freed. Ultimately, he frees his soul by admitting to his guilt. He did

commit the crimes. We can't trust him until his moment of reconciliation. After that we only see his honest side. His will is strong enough to finally come clean.

Poncelet experiences intimate and honest moments with Sister Helen Prejean. There is always a charged banter or un-welcomed flirting. This is creepy, but you get to know his sense of humor after learning more about where he is coming from. Poncelet grew up poor in Slidell. We find him in his twenties, and before going to the State Penitentiary, he went on a month long raping spree in the woods and then killed Walter Delacroix and raped Hope Percy. He has been locked up six years on Louisiana's Death Row at Angola Prison. Because of an upcoming election, Poncelet's death date has been expedited in an effort to bring attention to Governor Fredericks. Matt believes his sentence has been rushed because they have been killing mostly black inmates and it was time for a white prisoner. There are times that his words and actions in this play make an observer believe he is not being treated fairly by the system or by the State. There are other times an observer may feel Poncelet deserves the way he has been fast-tracked. Most of the stage time devoted to Poncelet takes place within six days time. These are the days leading to his execution. He is nervous. He is abrupt. He is emotional. He is a man about to die. Poncelet needs to build an empathetic connection with the observers. He builds one with Prejean. The communal shared experience between his revealing of private truths and audience caring enough to listen need to come from a connection in which the audience will trust him to tell the truth. When he confesses his sins, it's because he trusts Prejean and her advice about being more like Jesus. After his death, the truth is what remains. An observer learns to think about dignity and honesty through getting to know Poncelet.

Poncelet's connection to his family is integral to the experience of the audience. Tim Robbins and the organization behind this script want the audience to feel for Poncelet. Although

it feels manipulated, it is a device that will allow for them to analyze the situation from the perspective of a family member. Matt speaks as if he has had a couple failed marriages or arrangements. Has a daughter that he does not get to see. He has been arrested and jailed before for other crimes. His father is missing from the picture and only mentioned once in a Poncet monologue. Apparently his father got him drunk at a bar at the young age of 12. Every family has the troubled kid. In this family it is Matthew. He needs to still be the role model when they visit because he is the oldest child. It's awkward for an audience because Poncet might be guilty for major crimes, and here he is joking and laughing with his younger brothers that look up to him. He makes fun of his little brother for not being courageous. He knows he has hurt his mother emotionally. Matthew Poncet knows he has done wrong.

Earl Delacroix

He lost his son six years ago and during the first act he is in the process of losing his wife. Earl is lost but seems on task. He is on a constant hunt for answers. His will is strong, a bit shaken, but strong none the less. He is hurt by the systems of the State and the Church. He is upset with the length of Poncet's time on death row and is angry at the Catholic Church for helping out the murderer instead of the victim's families. Although usually a professional businessman, Earl Delacroix has let his appearance and behavior go lately. He attends a help group to try to come to terms with the loss of his son and the impending divorce. He does not feel special, he feels forgotten. Through his interactions with Sister Helen and by observing her servitude, Delacroix come around to close to her. He allows her into his life and she accepts.

Chaplain Farley

The Chaplain of the State Penitentiary is responsible for counseling inmates and preparing them for execution. He desires to be the person in charge of the most important task in the prison. He must save souls. The Chaplain clearly states the job that Sister Helen wants to pursue as ““You can save this boy by getting him to receive the sacraments of the church before he dies.” (Robbins 38). He is strong willed and stubborn. Chaplain Farley lives by the lessons of an older generation of Catholic teaching that formed his staunch opinions. Farley is stubborn to the idea of Nun helping out. He is an older character in the play always recognizable in his religious clothing. Deep inside he is a good guy who knows he wants to help the inmates. Chaplain Farley can be described as a strong willed counselor and a stubborn older man. Prejean is intimidated by Farley and Matt Poncelet doesn't trust him. “Matt doesn't trust Chaplain Farley and he has the right to choose his own spiritual counsel, doesn't he?” (Robbins 64)

Lucille Poncelet

For the majority of the play, Lucille desires to be left alone. She reveals, “Sometimes I want to pretend I'm not his mother so people will leave me alone, not hate me.” (Robbins 26). We will demonstrate this onstage through isolation. Through out the story, Lucille reveals her feelings to more and more people, ultimately winning the audience over to feel for her. Her situation is awful. Lucille's son is a convicted rapist and murderer. She is ashamed and heart broken without much will to go on. However, as the death of her son nears she attends the Pardon Board Hearing and visits on last day of Matt's life. Her will is stronger than she knows Her religion is important to her, it ultimately becomes her final moment in the play. We last see her clutching her sons in a rousing *Lord's Prayer*. She knows the innocent side of her son and

wants his soul to ascend. Lucille knows that her son will accept his responsibility and that he is capable of good. She is overworked and poor. Raising three more boys who have had Matt as their role model is rough for Lucille. She needs an escape from everything and fears every new thing because it is a step closer to losing her son. Life might be better for others in the play after Matt dies, but for Lucille it might be the end of her.

Ideas of the Play

Tim Robbins' script aims to have a High School audience analyze and have discourse about social issues. *Dead Man Walking* has an educational component built into the licensing agreement. Since only schools are granted permission to produce the play, they require each location to have at least two other departments include the themes and issues from the play introduce in classrooms. Some schools have had their Science Departments research various execution methods and their effect on the body, or a Math Department study statistics of capital punishment, crime and poverty. The main message for producers and directors of this play is to use the play as an educational tool to explore the issues and to create a wide-reaching learning experience for all involved.

The phrase "Dead Man Walking" is the title a poem by Thomas Hardy. The poem's speaker is someone whose spirit diminishes a bit more with every attempt at conquering a challenge. Similar to Matt Poncelet, the poem's speaker is some one who feels as if they don't exist to others because of their own choices. They become numb to everything because of lack of compassion from others.

And when my Love's heart kindled
In hate of me,
Wherefore I knew not, died I
One more degree.

And if when I died fully
I cannot say,
And changed into the corpse-thing
I am to-day,

Yet is it that, though whiling
The time somehow
In walking, talking, smiling,
I live not now. (Hardy)

Much like the poem, the tone feels like a funeral procession, something that is moving

forward towards an end. In this case, it is the end of Matthew Poncelet. There is urgency, panic and even moments of calm as one goes through the various stages of grief when presented with the losing of a life. When we know someone is to die of a disease and is in the Hospice stage there is a sense of hopelessness and a sense of immediacy. Conversations must happen before the person dies. It's the same in this play. Environments feel clinical, conversations feel important and people come across as people. It's humanity and it's redemptive. This play about reconciliation rings a tone that impresses the need for dignity for all.

The plot and characters in *Dead Man Walking* all deal with the idea of dignity throughout the script. It ultimately challenges the audience to make up their mind to respect people. The problems in life come from people disrespecting one another. In specific moments, there are depictions of lack of respect for people in the following moments:

- Herbie's Mom won't let him study with Sister Prejean
- Governor Frederick's speeding up the killings to gain attention for his campaign
- Chaplain Farley talking down and doubting Sister Prejean
- The Warden, Chaplain, Sargents, Guards and clerks coldness
- Poncelet is denied music
- Poncelet and brothers laugh at one brother's lack of bravery
- Poncelet's mom was humiliated in public
- Percy tells Poncelet that he wishes him dead
- Poncelet does not respect Chaplain Farley, therefore request Prejean to be spiritual counselor
- The students at Hope House lose respect for Prejean because of what their

parents are telling them

In broader categories, this play focuses on dignity for women, for the poor, the unfortunate, the innocent, the victims, the guilty, government employees, and those dedicated to religious servitude.

This play is about having the heart to care for another person for who they truly are. We are encouraged to be like Jesus, act like Sister Helen and speak like Sister Augusta Neal. The good prevails through the rough times is a message that the audience must feel so that they are comfortable to think about the issues at hand. Can you forgive a killer? Can you forgive a rapist? Can you forgive Matthew Poncelet? These questions weave through out the show and do not give up. Sister Helen's speech right after Matt is dead is a torch song tribute to fear she has of being responsible for the death of someone. She tells all who listen that we are not made to look at the death of someone like Poncelet. We are made to look at their crime but not the crime happening to them. They are being killed by our system, we are responsible for the death of a death row inmate. Sister Helen Prejean breaks the fourth wall at this moment to make sure we know we have seen the crime of our own doing. She wants us to know what we have done therefore we can stop the future of it. By creating this play, Robbins and Prejean get the audience to become warm to Poncelet and understand his struggle so that we do not "... look at the death of a human being with cold detachment, with indifference?" (Robbins 95). If one gets to know another human being, then they will know the spirit that is within. It's important for this generation to understand and feel what the power of compassion is.

Robbins has cleverly emphasized the loss of children. This is important because the audience will be filled with parents of the students onstage. He has built a significant aspect into this show to pull the audience towards to the heart of the play. Poncelet has lost his daughter, the

Percy family and Earl Delacroix have lost their kids, Lucille Poncelet will be losing her son Matt Poncelet. Having an audience of parents witness this will encourage an emotional connection.

This play is about breaking down walls in order to communicate. The grey area needs to be communicated and explored. The families have their houses, Poncelet has his cell and offices belong to the Warden and the Chaplain. These people are all living in their own worlds behind walls. They have their opinions and are sticking to them. Its when Prejean steps out of her everyday and joins others at their places does the discourse begin. She meets with these individuals in their worlds and tries to understand where they are coming from. She holds to her ideas and convictions, but opens up in a way that breaks down barriers between her character and others so that they are comfortable to relate how they feel. Our play will not have flats or prison bars, we will have invisible barriers and use movement to allow the audience to understand the locations. This production will focus on the discussions and will allow the audience to follow them without visual obstacles.

While the topic of capitol punishment is obvious, feminism is also abundant in the script. With this play, Robbins helps break down the patriarchal structure by showing the struggle women went through during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The patriarchal system in *Dead Man Walking* is represented by Chaplain Farley and the Warden at the prison. The protagonist, Sister Helen Prejean, is a nun who follows her beliefs that all humans deserve dignity. Throughout the play, there are instances in which she is the one who needs some respect.

This play is based on Sister Helen Prejean's autobiography and takes place during the early 1980s, a pivotal time for the women's rights in the workplace movement. Robbins has kept some of the awkward moments/struggles that Sister Prejean had experienced during her visits to the prison. She describes her first time visiting the prison as an intense experience. "Inside the

building I am accompanied by a guard through a series of gates down a hallway. “Woman on the tier” he yells, warning the prisoners to steer clear of the hallway” (Prejean 27). This same exchange happens on page nine of Robbins’ script. The beginning of act two includes a short exchange in which the ranking officer of death row, Sgt. Beliveau, says, “We don’t get a lot of female advisors here so bear with us as we figure it out” (Robbins 50). Because the play includes such everyday occurrences just as Prejean experienced them, the audience today is exposed to the realities that women went through thirty years ago.

Robbins challenges the authoritative male characters that run the prison. Our protagonist must first get clearance from Chaplain Farley before being granted permission to counsel the inmate on death row. There is tension from the beginning of their scene (Robbins 7):

Farley: Where is your habit?

Prejean: Our Sisters haven’t worn the habit for twenty years.

Farley: You are aware of the Papal request regarding nun’s garments aren’t you?

Prejean: The pope said “distinctive clothing” not habits.

Farley: I’m sure you will interpret it your own way. Whatever’s convenient.

Although being a nun is a role that feminists may deem as perpetuating patriarchy, Prejean’s character stands up for herself and others, therefore she is a positive role model for a Catholic High School audience. The aforementioned exchange demonstrates the *power* that the chaplain character has. Prejean doesn’t give in, but continues to challenge Farley in the scene, even when he suggests she is only there because of the idea of romance with the prisoner. Robbins’ feminist viewpoint addresses the “oppression, which is . . . the result of patriarchy, the supremacy of masculine power and authority most firmly entrenched in the figure of the father . . .” (Fortier 108). By showing the tension between a male dominated society that operates a male prison and

a nun that is trying to help a prisoner reconcile, Robbins has created a script that can encourage an audience to empathize and respond.

Robbins sets this up again in the middle of Act two when it is obvious that Prejean has done good work counseling the inmate, but Warden Hartman tries to take away her responsibilities by questioning her strength. He tells her, "...You're too emotionally involved with Matthew Poncelet and unable to fulfill your function as spiritual advisor" (Robbins 63). Later in the same scene it is revealed that he doesn't trust any female to advise Poncelet. The patriarchy is enforced more when Sgt. Beliveau states to Prejean, "What's a nun doing in a place like this? Shouldn't you be teaching children?" (Robbins 73). The audience witnesses the protagonist being treated with a lack of respect simply because she is a female. *Dead Man Walking* allows the audience to see a female character experience fighting for respect in a male dominated society.

Even the death row inmate character, Matt Poncelet, challenges Prejean simply because she is a female. He asks questions that demean her, like, "Don't you miss having a man? Don't you want to fall in love, get married? Have sex?" (Robbins 28). Due to his antagonist nature Poncelet may ask a priest a similar question, but he continues to flirt and treat Prejean like a sex object through out the first half of the play. The protagonist holds her ground, and continues to stand up for herself by saying things like, "I'm not here for your amusement, Matt, so have some respect" (Robbins 28). By the end of Act one, Poncelet learns that he cares for Prejean and that he respects her. Their last words to each other as he is being strapped down in the death chamber are, "I love you." (Robbins 92). Ultimately the evil character of Matt Poncelet comes to terms with his guilt, reconciles to God about his crimes and shows his respect to Prejean. She never gives up and she never gives in. Prejean is a role model for the audience. Robbins' play has

many layers including feminism. The manner in which *Dead Man Walking* depicts a female character overcoming obstacles helps to educate and empower a young audience.

Robbins has crafted a script that is loosely based on the auto-biography *Dead Man Walking* by Sister Helen Prejean. Her writing concerns two real-life capitol punishment cases in which the death row inmates were guilty of their crimes and ultimately put to death. Robbins has gleaned the thought as provided by Prejean, however he has transformed the real history with his imagination to create the engaging play script. One major thing that he has done with this script is to change the dates of all the events to be a year later than they were in real life. Presumably, Robbins made this choice with the movie and the play script because the audiences seeing the play live in an age of lethal injections. In real life, Patrick Sonnier was killed by the electric chair. By delaying the story to be a year later, the introduction of lethal injection and how it came to be common method can be addressed. He is using dramatic license to bring more into the story. As a playwright, Robbins follows the freedom pioneered by Felix Lope de Vega. "The narrow framework it afforded he enlarged to an extraordinary degree, introducing everything that could possibly furnish material for dramatic situations -- the Bible, . . . current events . . ." (NNDB). This script is powerful because it involves current events and Catholic characters that often quote the Bible. By doing this, Robbins also incorporates Lope's theory of characterizations involving their place in society. Most characters represent the American poor or the systems of justice and religion. Robbins makes their circumstances accessible to audiences by fully describing their challenges. This allows an observer to empathize with more characters than just the protagonist, Prejean, or death row inmate, Poncelet.

Although Lope de Vega insists the use of one single action unit, he allows playwrights to incorporate some extra aspects as long as they add to the impact of the play. "...be sure that

nothing you delete / that is required to make the whole complete” is advice from Lope that can allow a playwright to explore more than just the main action in order to make the play complete (Gerould 140). Prejean is trying to get Poncelet to admit his sins in order for his soul to live an eternal life. If Robbins had followed the Aristotelian theory of unity of plot, then his play would not have included scenes in which Prejean works with youth in her community, nor when she is confronted by the families of the victims. Robbins’ play is effective because it shows many different sides of the story. The audience is engaged because they observe the many obstacles the protagonist endures while balancing the complex case of capitol punishment. This humanizes her and allows for debate on whether she is doing the right thing. Perhaps she should be more concerned with the youth and families and not involved with the inmate. By including these scenes, the theme of human dignity is emphasized, therefore the whole becomes complete.

Lope suggests a playwright avoid silence on stage because “. . . when no one is speaking, the crowd / grows restless and the story slows it’s pace” (Gerould 141-142). The opera version of *Dead Man Walking* uses silence by stopping all music at the moment the inmate is injected by the needle. This is a very effective moment in the opera because of the lack of sound while the character passes away. Robbins’ play adheres more to Lope during this climatic moment. While the inmate is passing away, the deceased victims speak quotes from the Bible, Poncelet’s family speak the *Lord’s Prayer*, and Prejean gives a sermon. Robbins intends for the combined noise of the impassioned characters to affect the audience instead of using silence to do it.

Immediately before to the execution, Robbins finally reveals Poncelet’s guilt. Lope demands “. . . don’t untie your plot until the end is nigh” (Gerould 141). He suggests the audience will exit the theater if they figure out the plot too early. Robbins has brilliantly heeded this advice. For most of the play, the audience or reader is skeptical about the innocence of Poncelet.

Not only do Robbins and Lope break the prior rules, but they also transform history a bit. Marvin Carlson defends Lope by stating, “. . . it is the duty of the poet . . . to transform both the history and nature by imagination, so long as the impression remains true” (Carlson 64). Because Robbins has combined two real life cases into one fictional dramatization and has taken many liberties to get his point across, this work becomes a very emotional experience for the audience/reader. Lope “. . . was a quantum playwright who recognized the different faces of the same thing” (Fischer). Robbins provides an intriguing script by forcing the audience to consider the opposing viewpoints of capitol punishment. This makes observers see the death of human being without a cold detachment.

The ideas of this text are expressed through methods inspired by Brecht. A-effect is commonly known as “alienation”, a method in which a playwright can get an audience to analyze an issue. Tim Robbins gets observers of his play *Dead Man Walking* to analyze the issue of capitol punishment through the dialogue and action of his characters; protagonist Sister Helen and death row inmate Matt Poncelet. Robbins has adopted Brecht’s theory in which a “spectator says . . . It’s got to stop – The sufferings of this man appall me, because they are unnecessary . . .” (Brecht 174). In Epic theatre, Brecht believed the observer should be aroused to take a stand on an issue; the play is an argument and humanity is questioned. The Poncelet character did commit the crimes of murder and rape. Robbins has crafted a play in which the observer must decide if Poncelet’s crimes are enough to not allow him dignity, or dignity to any prisoners since Poncelet represents those shut away from society. Brecht’s alienation, *Verfremdung*, was used in his Epic theatre to “render even everyday events remarkable, particular, and demanding inquiry” (Carlson 385). The way Robbins has crafted this tale of capitol punishment forces an audience to look deeper and to think about it.

The Catholic organization, *Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project*, which gives permission to produce the play is ardently against the death penalty. However, they only allow a school to produce it if the school can prove their students will be engaged in discourse about capital punishment and prisoner rights. It is fitting that Robbins' use of analysis of the issue through script is the basis of such discourse. The purpose of the script and project ". . . integrates the power of theatre arts and academic study into the national discourse on the death penalty to replace ignorance, apathy, and cynicism among young people regarding the death penalty with information, introspection, and inspiration" (DMWPlay).

"By leading the audience to identify with the characters and accept their fate rather than calling it into question . . ." is the type of theatre that Brecht avoided (Gerould 445). Robbins' play wants the audience to question the death of Poncelet, rather than just accept it. During Prejean's final monologue the audience is asked to ponder a huge question:

. . . perhaps there is some redemption in reconciliation. Perhaps there is some peace in not letting the hatred overtake you, in not letting those that have hurt you continue after they're gone. If we reconcile, do our memories of our loved ones fade or do we honor our loved ones with a wish for everlasting peace, a holy place without violence, hatred or revenge? . . . (Robbins 96)

Robbins' script could be compared to Friedrich Schiller's idea that theatre should be a moral institution, but the script is more like Brecht's Epic theatre in which the goal was for the subject at hand to be observed. Therefore the morality of the play comes when the observer has analyzed it. Robbins' protagonist is a symbol for morality. The audience witnesses Prejean's struggle to bring dignity to Poncelet. Since capital punishment and the prison system is an argumentative issue, Robbins has made the wise choice to allow an observer to make up their

own mind. In the fore mentioned monologue, the Prejean character does not use words like “must” and “should”. Such words would preach morality upon the audience. Instead, Prejean speaks “perhaps” and “if we” which allow the observer to form their own opinions.

The alienation techniques required by the *Dead Man Walking* script include sixteen projections of poverty and capitol punishment statistics, many monologues delivered through the fourth wall, and a narrative told by the protagonist. *Dead Man Walking* is informative, thought provoking and encourages an audience to respect all people, but it also engages through a strong story with developed characters. Although Epic theatre utilizes Alienation, it still needs effective story telling to not become “...highly disagreeable, humorless, [a] strenuous affair” (Brecht 175). There is a light-hearted moment in which Prejean jokes with a fellow nun about buying a suit for the inmate, and many touching moments in which Prejean receives advice from her mother. These instances allow an audience to trust the narrative, even though they become surprised and curious by where it leads. The observers learn concrete facts through the projections, and Robbins humanizes the social issue by having a large portion of the script focus on the personalities and experiences of Poncelet and Prejean, therefore observers learn while being entertained. Brecht believed, “Theatre remains theatre even when it is instructive theatre, and in so far as it is good theatre it will amuse” (Brecht 175).

Ultimately, Prejean is able to get Poncelet to speak the truth. His reconciliation comes just before his execution, however it is because of Prejean that Poncelet has been able to finally confess his sins. She is compassionate and respects him. He finds his dignity. He is able to have communion and to be pure again just before he ascends. Sister Helen Prejean beat the odds. She could have given up, or been persuaded to not help Poncelet. By hanging in there and giving respect to another character, Prejean has learned of her ability to make things better. By breaking

down walls and invoking conversations, people are better off for knowing the compassionate Sister Helen Prejean. A lasting idea of the play is for everyone to be a bit more like Sister Helen Prejean. The final moment inspires us to pray with an enemy and to work at relationships. There is common ground to be found. Robbins suggests it is in prayer as Delacroix and Prejean end the play on knee. This is an important visual image for our Mater Dei Catholic audience.

Past Productions

Due to the fact the permission to produce this play is only given to High Schools and to Universities, it is difficult to locate legitimate reviews of this production. Many of the reviews out there have been published by school newspapers and are more publicity than critique. However, there are a few notable productions that have legitimate reviews. Apparently some churches and non-profit theatres have collaborated with academic institutions in order to produce the play, so quoted reviews have come critics of those productions. These quotes are from the following productions:

1. Denver Victorian Playhouse 2006 – a collaboration between Denver University College of Law and Alliance Stage Company of Denver. Holly Bartges for Backstage Colorado.
2. City Lights Theatre of San Francisco – a collaboration with Notre Dame High School in January 2010. Reviewed by thebroadwaycriticblog.com.
3. Annapolis, Maryland –Anne Arundel Community College and the Unitarian Universalist of Annapolis' Dignity Players. Review by Dick Wilson for the Bay Times Weekly.

All the reviews of this production noted the ability of the play to promote discourse. The review of the City Lights production remarks:

This play (just as the book and movie does) questions your beliefs on capitol punishment. As an audience member, you go through the emotional heart ache of the victims and their family members, as well as the emotional roller coaster that death row inmate, Matthew Poncelet, goes through as Sister Helen Prejean strives to save him. ([thebroadwaycriticblog](http://thebroadwaycriticblog.com))

The review from Annapolis states, “. . . this is a play to provoke self-searching and reflection” (Wilson). While the Denver reviewer comments, “Inspiring and unnerving at the same time . . .” and calls it “. . . an important story, a vital issue on capitol punishment” (Bartges). This is what we need at our school. The past two years we have produced *Project: Discourse* in which we staged plays with seminars and reflections. The educational component of this production is mandatory, but the reviews make it seem well worth it.

The reviewers all clearly summarize the plot, characters and ideas of the play. They boil it all down to what is at the root of the show. Dick Wilson wrote:

The play is really about reconciliation. Prejean must reconcile the opposing view of the victim’s families and the condemned man. Poncelet, for his part, must come to terms with the reality of what he’s done and accept responsibility for his actions. . . . the prisoner . . . convincingly displays the toughness of the human spirit: he’s the man who has no real hope, but he hopes anyway. (Wilson)

Some fears I have as director were confirmed in the reviews. I am afraid the plot is fairly predictable, so why should an audience care to go on the journey? I also fear the play is simply too long. Wilson noted, “ The storyline is predictable, but the subtleties in the details give this play it’s impact.” Bartges comments, “The play itself is too long. After the execution of Matt, the emotional impact hits, and the play should end with dramatic flair, but it doesn’t”. Perhaps Tim Robbins should of thought of brevity as educational tool.

I need to make sure I address these issues in order to provide a decent production. My gut has been saying the same thing the reviewers said. To not address it would be foolish. An idea to confront the length of the show is in our promotion of the show. During the student preview days we are limited to 80 minutes due to school schedule for the days. Perhaps showing only Act 1

will keep their attention and still provide fodder for discussion. Interested students can then purchase tickets for the entire production. Although the story lines are predictable, they serve as a symbol for common struggle. It is creating a common experience for the observers to references when discussing a real world issue. Perhaps the predictable moments and threads should be treated like a morality tale and highlight their obviousness. Perhaps this can be worked out through rehearsals. If the tension in most scenes is intense enough, the audience will not feel the drag of the show.

The use of multi-media is required by the contract for this production. Tim Robbins has included many statistics and informative images that are to be projected through out the play. This seems like it could be a distraction if not handled well. The review of the City Lights production remarked, “the images that were displayed felt emotionally manipulative. I almost wish they had decided to not use any multi-media.” Although this really isn’t an option, it is a valid response. I intend to use the project screens in more than one way. I believe some creative shadow play can make the screen be both live and recorded. The manipulative ways in which the images can effect the audience is exciting. I intend to embrace the multi-media to make this production achieve something similar to Brecht’s A-Effect.

I trust my instinct that this play can be an intense experience for everyone and their critical thinking skills. The final quote from the review of the City Lights production gives me hope; “*Dead Man Walking* let’s you decide how you feel about capitol punishment. It never forces or pushes; the story unfolds in front of you, almost without bias. You will feel something” (thebroadwaycriticblog.com).

The Playwright

The following information is from the biography of Tim Robbins on DMWplay.org:

- Born October 16, 1958 in West Covina, California and raised in New York City's Greenwich Village, Tim Robbins has a long list of notable credits as an actor, director, writer and producer of films and theater.
- *Dead Man Walking*, which he also wrote and produced, won multiple awards including the Academy Award for Best Actress for Susan Sarandon, the Christopher Award, the Humanitas Award and four awards at the Berlin Film Festival, as well as an 4 Oscar nominations including Best Director and a Golden Globe nomination for Best Screenplay.
- Robbins also serves as Artistic Director for The Actors' Gang, a theater company formed in 1982 that has over 80 productions and more than 100 awards to their credit. As a playwright he has been produced in London, Paris, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and at the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland.
- In addition, Robbins stage adaptation of *Dead Man Walking* has been performed in over 170 universities nationwide. Rights to perform the play are exclusive to educational institutions until 2014. In order to obtain the rights for the play, universities must commit two departments other than theater arts to offer courses on the death penalty. Throughout the country and the world for the past four years, symposiums, lectures and debates have been held in conjunction with the theatrical productions leading to a substantial increase in the dialogue and education surrounding this important issue.

Robbins is also very proud to sponsor educational programs with The Actors' Gang that provide arts education to Elementary, Middle and High School students in the L.A. area. The Gang has also worked for three years providing theatrical workshops to incarcerated inmates in the L.A. prison system. (DMWplay.org)

Additional Info:

5 April 2010 Father Gil Robbins died of Prostate cancer

19 April 2010 Mother dies of heart attack.

Separated from longtime companion Susan Sarandon, from People magazine wrote in 2009:

One of Hollywood's most enduring relationships has ended – Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins have broken up after more than two decades together, PEOPLE has learned exclusively.

The couple met on the set of *Bull Durham*, and they have two sons together, Jack, 20, and Miles, 17. Sarandon, 63, was previously married to Chris Sarandon, whom she met in college. The actress also dated director Franco Amurri in the mid '80s. The two had a daughter, Eva Amurri, in 1985. (Amurri is also an actress; she most recently appeared in Showtime's *Californication*).

Sarandon and Robbins, 51, were admired for their long relationship in the face of the pressures of show business, their much-discussed age difference – he's 12 years younger – and that they never married.

"I won't marry because I am too afraid of taking him for granted or him taking me for granted – maybe it will be a good excuse for a party when I am 80," Sarandon has said in the past.

Both famous liberal activists, they have never been too political at home with their children. "I've never tried to force [politics] on them," the actress tells *Psychologies* magazine in its January issue, but adds that the election of President Barack Obama "got them excited."

The family all attended the inauguration in January, though Sarandon insists "our dinner table conversations are rarely political." (Triggs)

Student Learning Goals

1. They will understand the principles of Brecht's A-Effect technique and why/how theatre can be used to address social change.
2. They will gain appreciation for the Sisters of St. Joseph and their efforts.
3. They will achieve personal growth in stage confidence, characterization building and story telling skills.
4. Our school community to support theatre arts more. Our students will learn that their efforts are worthwhile.

Production Journal

11 August 2011

I'm back from CWU summer classes, back at work as Director of Performing Arts at MDHS. I'm back to some new challenges. This could be a very difficult year.

There is a new Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Technology. Although she tells me how much she loves the arts, I do not believe her. It's going to be a difficult year.

They didn't hire a theatre instructor to replace the one that just retired. They want to use a new Choir teacher with no drama experience to teach Theatre Arts 1. I do not have another teacher to direct the other plays or to produce our many events. It's just me.

The new Assistant Principal said I scared the new choir teacher when I gave her the curriculum map for the Theatre Arts 1 classes. This choice to not hire a Theatre Instructor is because of this new Assistant Principal. I've been advised to still offer the same amount of theatre events that this generation is accustomed to. That means directing at least four plays, attending four theatre festivals, producing several student workshops and running our successful Improv Comedy Club. They won't let me assign positions on theatre events to the choir teacher. So I will be doing the job of two theatre teachers producing events while running the Performing Arts Department. It's too much.

They wanted me to one year direct *Dead Man Walking* for every student to see during the school day, just like they did at Servite High School and Santa Margarita High Schools. Before I left for summer, they designated four days in November as *Project: Discourse* on the calendar. Now, they say I can only show 80 minutes of the play because they can't modify the schedule to show the whole show. I have to figure out a solution.

My request for assembly funds to host a speaker series with Sister Helen Prejean has

been denied because they want to bring back the awful speaker, Dr. Larry Rosen, to babble again about his philosophy of teens use of technology, which will only be for faculty. I get that we are implementing the iPad2 program campus wide, so we need tech in services for teachers, but this means there won't be an assembly for students this year. I'll need to make sure my *Project: Discourse* guest speaker panel becomes an experience for all students and faculty. I know that Sister Helen is speaking in Anaheim at the Religious Ed Congress in March, perhaps I can find a way for students to meet her then.

These set backs are almost predictable at my school. I think everyone is on board with something, then they are not. I'm going to need to make sure the team I gather for *Project: Discourse* is committed. Our school might have plans to go one way, but then ends up going another often. I call it the Mater Dei Bunny Hop, take two steps forward and then one step back. Eventually things progress.

12 August 2011

I've decided to focus on the play and the kids. They are dropping by to borrow scripts. Most of them read the autobiography over summer. I'm so glad the students are committing as much as I am. Together, along with a little imagination, this will work out.

The new theatre teacher was going to be the stage manager of the show and receive a stipend from the school. It would be a great way to introduce the new teacher to our theatre community and learn our ways. This would have included a stage manager stipend provided by the school. If things worked out, the second semester the person would have received a directors' stipend from the school and directed a play. Now, it's just me directing four major shows and plenty of smaller ones too. I need a stage manager on *Dead Man Walking* more than any other

position. For me to balance my daytime gig this year, I need a stage manager to help keep the cast and show on task. I no longer have time to organize props, quick changes, etc. However this play is full of them. I need to make the transitions smooth and part of the flow of the show. A stage manager is needed to make this happen.

My friend, Melissa Jacobson is a kooky AP English Teacher that happens to have a theatre degree from Brown. She is approaching retirement and is excited to dive deeper into theatre before she leaves MDHS. For five years, I have had her organize concession sells and picnic packages for my annual Shakespeare event. She is really good at listing and checking things. Last year, with my promotion came directing an over-the-top Senior musical tradition during the same time as my *Romeo and Juliet*. I had Melissa assistant direct the servant scenes and their transitions. She gets my need to have it appear as part of the show.

The reason we didn't hire some teachers and why some people's stipend are coming out of stipends is because we might need to purchase the Santa Ana Bowl. We have rented it for every home Football game for the past 30+ years, but a Mexican Soccer team is talking about buying it. So in July, while I was at CWU, this started happening. Okay. I get why there's no money for faculty. I'm going to have to forge ahead with this production, because apparently people above me are focused on Santa Ana Bowl. Our first game is in less than a month.

So, I ended up asking Melissa to Stage Manager. Can she do it? I hope so. I told her that I plan the set to simple, because it's a play about breaking down walls. Most indication of doors and hallways will be done through choreographed movement. The set will change by simply moving a chair and table. There will be light pools, so in September we need to decide where those pools go based on blocking. I did warn her that I want strong moments to come from organic rehearsal techniques, so her job will be to track blocking moments and assign the Guards

furniture to move. She'll be the one calling the sound and light cues.

A problem, but to be expected. The school for seven years paid me for the plays I directed and for the ones I assisted on, while paying the former teacher for the two shows she directed each year. Before leaving for summer CWU, I had updated the Position Description for the new theatre teacher. It include a fall production stipend to Stage Manage a play and spring production stipend to Direct a play. Administration signed the proposal. They agreed to this.

While away they didn't hire a teacher, I'm not allowed to have new Choir teacher who is teaching Theatre Arts 1 be the stage manager, because she will be to busy with Choir. Then why is she teaching Theatre 1? So, they say they can't pay the Stage Manager stipend because they didn't hire a new teacher. If I want a stage manager, I'll have to pay out of the budget for my show. This journey is starting to go up hill. I better stretch first.

This is how the theatre budget works:

We have two accounts.

1. Each Fall, the School Side account loans us \$18,000 for all theatre events for the whole year (except Shakespeare, it's self sufficient). Of the \$18,000 we have to pay back \$10,600 in revenue by May of each year. The former teacher would only put two shows a year by renting a theatre Huntington Beach. A couple years ago, she was off for a year and I ended up directing 4 plays in one year. For the same budget, we produced all 4 plays on campus and made profit. I think that's why they promoted me.
2. The other account is where the profit goes which rolls over each year. My profit year, this account went from usually being empty to having \$12,000 in profit from my productions. I spent a bit of it getting scrim sticks and faders and a light board for the Little Theatre. My plan is to make more money to invest in the Monarch Pavilion. It's so obvious that we won't have the

multi-million Performing Arts Center for many years. I'm embarrassed to show off our fantastically talented students in such a non-Performing environment all the time. I take each Performing Art Ensemble/Team on the road twice a year to promote our programs to potential future students. We come in strong, but if you visit our campus, then you see we are just "making do" when it comes to our venue. We spend a great deal of budget and donations on turning non-theatrical spaces into being performance areas. If we had a venue that was most hospitable to hosting a show then we could spend our money on personnel and production values. I want to make a profit this year to be able to afford a modification of the Monarch Pavilion. I've been turned down on removing the Basketball banners for our play, but maybe I can change minds with this show. Perhaps we give an experience to them and in turn get something back.

If I can get enough donations from cast parents ahead of time, then I think I'll use the McNally Enterprises Inc. (MEI) to build a safe stage and safe audience platforms. Usually, I use my facilities staff, the like to build stuff for us. But I need the show to be safe. I could be a big cast. Since the class day shows are no longer the 2 hour show, we need to adapt and create something that can fit the 90 minute class period. That means brining in every English class during that block to see the presentation, what ever it ends up being. I need platforms so that every one can see. It might be as much as 400 students during some periods. We can remove chairs on show nights, I don't anticipate more than 200 patrons per show. MEI is expensive, but worth it. They are Mater Dei family that I go way back with, taught their sons, etc. Their company puts on runway shows in Beverly Hills, or red carpet events. Their platforms are steel deck and their crew is quick at setting up and strike. This means we won't be able to hire a voice coach, but I need safe platforms for audience and a Stage Manager so that I don't go crazy.

Two major expenses that I am comfortable with committing our budget to:

1. Paying Melissa Jacobson \$1,500
2. Paying up to \$5,000 to MEI for stage and audience

Our school has fencing for securing off areas during dances. Won't cost anything I can use some to wrap behind the audience platforms. Although the play will not have wall or door units, the audience can have some simple fencing around them to set a mood. We have folding chairs for the audience, they store them adjacent to our gym. No cost there. The triangle lower level stage needs to be a flat grey, like concrete, to remind of the prison floor. Maybe the Prison Guards become ushers since they will be running around the gym the whole show while acting and set changing. This is a prison story, so I'm letting the prison tell the story.

The rear-projection screen could be an expense. I want it to be big. For it to feel like the modern blackboard. It is what our iPad2 program uses for education. I want the kids in the audience to think they are in a classroom, a lesson is about to teach them something.

The magic happens when the play begins and Prejean speaks a lecture about Sisters of St. Joseph and their response to poverty. Before that, the chain link, prison guards and a big screen like in any classroom on campus, should cause a feeling for the students.

The screen is important throughout. I don't want it to suck like the production I saw at Servite. Their projection use was minimal, small and interrupted the scenes. Since I don't have much to tell the audience where we are, I want to find pictures to project of houses and landscapes. Each part of the prison needs an image to help the audience. Going with the concept, the projections will be filtered black and white.

This screen is important. Allison Bergeron in Advancement has been talking to me about splitting the cost on a rear projection screen set-up. We want one for our promotional tours. I'm

going to see if we can buy one soon.

14 August 2011

Lights. I can save some money there. We have an AV guy named Larry Sharp. He provides the lighting and sound for all events in the new gym. He is already paid a stipend to do things like rallies and plays. I met with him earlier in the week and he is interested, because lighting is what he really enjoys. He said he'd like to get the lights up by Halloween, that way he can help one of my students program the board. He also has a dance recital on Nov 12th, just before my show. He wants to be able to light both events with one plot.

29 August 2011

The first day of school is always exciting. It's a new start. It's a chance to begin well. In the Advanced Theatre Arts class today we tried a new approach to beginning. I gave a presentation that will hopefully set the focus for our year. Usually we do some get to know you games and catch up with each other on the first day of school. This time the kids got my Semiotics Presentation from the Analysis and Criticism class. I modified it a bit for them, but got across the idea of communicating with signs on stage. The students were very attentive throughout. I then explained to them our plan for the year. Every play will include class exercises and projects. Before they left the room, they already knew their topics for the Brecht and Brecht presentations in September.

After school, Melanie Carrillo and I spent a great deal of time talking about the costumes. She shared pictures that inspire her. We talked about my concept statement and shared ideas about the various personalities in the script. I shared with her about Costume Accessories class at

CWU. Cat and I had been trying to figure out solutions for keeping the guard badges and accessories/props under budget. Melanie had a great idea about printing up badges onto adhesive canvas. Its worth a try. Melanie has been diving deeper and deeper into working on our shows. She loves it. I appreciate her excitement for the costumes on *Dead Man Walking*.

30 August 2011

Auditions. They came prepared. Some checked out the scripts from my Secretary Karen Pescetti while was away at CWU. They actually read the play before auditions. This is something that started with the first *Project: Discourse – Diary of Anne Frank*. They have learned to prepare and it seemed 75% of the students were well prepared. On some shows kids come in and read a paper so badly lacking character. This was not that.

They checked in with Theatre Arts Club Audition Officers, turned in the forms they downloaded from the Theatre Program page on the MDHS website. They remained outside until 10 students at a time were called into the room. They sat in a row and observed/cheered on their peers. I explained the callback list would be posted on the callboard tomorrow morning.

Students tried to use Southern accents, they slowed down their speech. Most students were memorized enough to add various emotions to their audition selection. I believed sometimes. The audition that nailed it was Jackie Janowicz for Lucille Poncelet. It surprised me, last year her mother shared that Jackie was reading the autobiographies to prepare to get the Helen Prejean role. I am so glad Jackie chose to be Lucille after reading the script. It obviously spoke to her because she made it speak. I am so proud of her. She is about to start her year as Theatre Arts 4 student. It is time to rock an audition. And she did. The role is hers. I now need to figure out how the others fall into place.

Everyone's favorite, Matt Dallal, made me feel. He is always good. I have cast him in key character roles before like Mercutio, Sir Toby, Bus Driver in *Bus Stop*, Peter in *Anne Frank*, etc. He is the strongest actor I have ever taught. He could do the role, but I think I need him as Earl Delacroix. Yes, another key character. Matt Dallal is on my mind for *Wedding Singer* in April, his time to star will come. He is an actor who has a logical inner monologue constantly running. He can make a role come to life in memorable way. I'll call him back to read the big roles, but I'm thinking Delacroix.

Ok, you want to know, who is working for Matt Poncelet? We have some options:

Casey Brecher – yes, can do it, great kid, great work ethic, always helps out

Joey Busch – nice to see a deeper side of him, can be presentational, but today was subtle

Matt Pancoe – he is a good actor, could play the role like Sean Penn, but is very innocent

Sean Hunter – stutters, awkward, but very interesting

Isaac Galardo – his skills seemed more natural than other auditions, he has good instincts

Jacob DeBilio – Wow, big surprise. He was fantastic. He is a natural, Percy or Poncelet

Helen Prejean:

I have a tough choice to make tomorrow. So many girls were really good, but in different ways. I really need to read them with Poncelets at callbacks.

Many of these actresses will be better for the other ladies in the show. I got to get them reading and working off partners tomorrow.

Chaplain Farley & Warden:

Mackin Carrol and Matt Pancoe, which one which?

Ensemble:

Do I limit cast to 35 & have a comfortable fall semester directing a manageable size cast?

Or do I cast everyone in the show? Create big protests at the two executions? Cast of 55?

31 August 2011

Callbacks. I set-up the Little Theatre in a triangle layout. There were two audiences formed with an empty playing space in the middle. It's a slightly smaller version of the stage I intend to have built for the production. I invited the students into the room and to sit in the seats. They received their sides and partners, and I encouraged them to think about performing for both audiences. They then had a few minutes to go outside or use the empty space to rehearse their call back with their partners. I asked everyone to cheer each other on and to allow silence during acting and compliments during down times.

My choices became clear as the scenes were played. Joanna Cornjo stood out as a compassionate actress who is very innocent and kind. Bryana Corza stood out as a confident speaker. They look alike. I had goose bumps. Both students have really pitched in on Shakespeare productions. They never had a chance to be in a leading role before. Both girls brought it on today, both could be Prejean.

Casey Breacher had a scary part of him come out while reading the first conversation with Prejean. It was nice to see his range. Yesterday he showed sensitivity and cried with the confession monologue. Today he intimidated a nun and it was great. He will be Matt Poncelet.

Joey Busch is a natural for Casey's brother and two freshmen Sean Soper and Phillip Venti can be the youngest brothers. Their mom is still Jackie Janowicz as Lucille Poncelet.

I think Matt Pancoe could be good as Chaplain. Mackin Carroll could be the Warden, he has a bravado about him. I could have him play live guitar through out show except for when he plays the Warden that outlaws hymns. Jacob DeBilio is a complete mystery to me, but I'm

willing to trust him as Percy because there is a rage in him. He has some drive and power to be commanding. Veronica Valencia is a senior that always tries hard and could improve with a role as Mrs. Percy. She and Jacob could work well off each other.

Matt Dallal kind of knew by the end that he was being considered for the role of Earl Delacroix. However, that didn't stop him from delivering a strong Poncelet.

The callbacks were fun, but the guilt trips tonight are not. When I got home, I made the mistake of checking my MDHS iPad2. There were emails from some of the boys I called back. They were pleading to have the leading role. I was surprised by Mackin Carroll's offer to quit the Cross Country team or Matt Pancoe's claim he is the only one who can really do it right. Before the kids had iPad2s, I didn't get such annoying emails.

1 September 2011

12:15pm

At 2:00, I'm going to hold the best Theatre Arts Club Meeting ever!

For the past nine years I have been trying to understand what the club actually does. It's a new year, I'm the only theatre person remaining on this campus, so we are going to make the club active. We will meet in the old gym, which I'm supposed to call Monarch Pavilion. Instead of it feeling like a meeting, I've decided to start the monthly meetings this year with improv group games as a warm-up ritual. Then we will have our sit down and listen to the officers speak about their ideas and dreams. I will surprise everyone by announcing the *Dead Man Walking* cast at the end of the meeting. I've never done it this way before, but think it will work. I usually post the list on the callboard and then run and hide. However, the play is about community and this fall I need the theatre kids to pull a community together. I hope they cheer on the names of the leads

and appreciate the large ensemble choice. I like to try new ways of doing things.

4:00pm

Oh yeah, they loved it. They were cheering for each-other and lots of hugs. It was like theatre, I had a script that produced huge reactions from the crowd. They gave standing ovations for the announcement of Casey for Matt Poncelet. The 100+ kids in the room went nuts when I announced Joanna Cornejo and Bry Corza for Prejean. The great kids that were considered for leads, but got supporting roles had to smile when coming up on stage to accept their script and schedule, their peers were supporting them. I'm doing it this way from now on. Some kids that didn't audition were there, this could help inspire them to audition next time. It made us feel like a united team eager to accomplish a big task.

6 September 2011

Today was awesome, we got to read through Act 1 and it was nice. The students were better behaved then ever before, like they were on task because our show is important. They were on time and brought their iPad2s and scripts. We snuck into the old gym and made a circle in the center. We surrounded the MD symbol, I realized how important is to have it visible during the production. It's at the center of my design. I taught the new kids and reminded the vets about my warm-up ritual. We do an "I Promise" call and response, then we hop and shake in circle a rousing round of "1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8." Once it was mastered and the students loosed up, I spoke in the middle. I told them, "We are going to try some different approaches to making this a great play. I need you to trust our journey and to go for it. I will be dismissing you back into the Little Theatre in categories, please sit in the chairs assigned to your characters. You only need your iPad2 and your script."

When they entered in their grouping, whether Family Members or Government Employees or Hope House, etc, the cast members found a room lit with only four hanging lamps similar to a type in a prison hallway. I'm thinking of using these hanging lamps in the lighting design for the show. They've been in a box since *Bus Stop*. There were sections of chairs for each category with a little sign. They were set up in short little rows all facing into the center of the room. It felt like a very crowded 360 degrees senate chamber. Projected on the screen, the students saw the *Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project* website dmwplay.org. They cheered when the little scroll on the right column flashed "Mater Dei High School, Santa Ana, November 2011." I showed the short video on the website from Sister Helen Prejean to casts embarking on the production. The students were into it and laughed at Sister Helen's humor. When it was done, I asked the cast to open their iPad2 to the Pages App. This is something they all learned in their English classes already, so it went well. It was exciting, our iPad2 endeavor at our school is happening. Not only do 2,000+ students have an iPad2, but they actually know how to use it. The students went silent and instantly brought up their Pages App, I then had them name a document for their rehearsal journaling. I asked them to "type the following words: Devotion, Sacrifice, Dignity, Death." I explained that during read-throughs we will be journaling about those words. I then had them set down their iPad2 and open their scripts. I asked each category of students to stand when called and they introduced their name and character. Many kids made remarks about the separation into categories and how it made them feel like these groups are at war with each other. I fostered an impromptu discussion that the kids were having. On the inside, I was so proud that our discourse was already beginning. We read Act 1, I stopped kids once in a while and asked them to avoid putting on an accent. The kids were all over the place with accents. I said "let's just say it as written and see what happens." They spoke in their normal voices and

just brought the text to life. The musicality of the script just kind of happened. The banter scenes were quick with back and forth, the getting to know someone scenes were slow and cautious. The students did a great job. By the end of Act 1, they were talking with excitement. I asked for them to turn on their iPad2, it was time to write. The students went silent and were engaged in composing their thoughts about the four words. I asked if any one wanted to share their writing, some stood up and read from their chairs, the others clapped for each who read. It was cool.

8 Thursday 2011

We began our second rehearsal by watching a video of Sister Helen Prejean. The students were seated in the categories again while watching the YouTube clip I projected from my school issued iPad2. It gave a quick summary of the actual murders and then described Helen's journey. It ended with her giving a speech at the University of Oregon. I then spoke about the importance of theatre and how it can bring people together. I asked them to journal about the four words (Devotion, Sacrifice, Death and Dignity) in relation to theatre. Once again, the students flicked on their iPad2, these kids are excited to write on it. I can the mood lighting in the room while the type because of the light up screen. When I taught English 1 years ago, it was so hard to keep everyone quiet during writing time, but now they are so excited about their iPad2. I am too, our cast is sharing their thoughts in writing now, I need to find a way for them to share it. I have to figure out something.

We did the warm-up outside and then warmed-up our voices with tongue twisters, went back into the Little Theatre. Before reading Act 2, I displayed a ground plan that I had designed on Note Taker HD. The kids asked me allsorts of questions about the staging, but mostly, they

were remarking about the audience set up being two different perspectives. We then read Act 2, I would pause the reading often to explain to the ensemble what I believed their characters would be doing in scene transitions. They would smile when I did this, it helped them feel like their role was important to the story.

When it got to the confession scene I asked Casey and Joanna to sit in the center of the room. They were in two chairs facing each other with their knees touching. They made eye contact and then read the scene. The other cast members dropped their scripts and watched. Casey cried while reading, so did Joanna. I said nothing except read the stage directions in a monotone voice. Matt Dallal stood up during his lines in the execution scene, it started a chain reaction. The supporting characters would stand for their lines and it was neat to see everyone's heads turn to watch and listen to the words being spoken. Jacob DeBilio was very raw and emotional with his Percy reading. The two nuns were having some problems with words and mumbling scripture, but really their hearts were right. They were lots of tears flowing during the quiet reading of the end of the play. When it was done, the students were silent, some looking down. They were moved.

I broke the silence with, "Who wants to share?". Matt Pancoe stood first, he said, "It's important we do this play right. We need to do our part to make it amazing." Joanna Cornejo said, "It's special we have this play to do." I fostered a discussion by bringing it back to the text, "What in this story is important to you?" Bryanna Corza shared it was the confrontation on issues of race and poverty. Kendra Hennegen read her journal about Death from yesterday and spoke of how it relates to Prejean's message. My students are talking with each other about important things. The show is off to a great start.

9 September 2011

Our third read-thru was quick. I told the students about the Parent Meetings their parents needed to attend on the Back to School nights. We discussed the schedule, I introduced Melissa Jacobson as our stage manager, I explained how I imagined rehearsals will run. More play, some new things like Shadowing, etc. After the shop talk, We read all of Act 1 and the first half of Act 2. I sent them away with the journal assignment to relate the four words to Sister Helen Prejean.

10 September 2011

This week went well, the students are engaging in the script and excited to start. I know it's going to be a tricky balancing act since I am down another theatre teacher. September has ShortsFest and the Performing Arts Tour and the venue is booked for dance team, song team and color guard rehearsals. I'm not looking forward to blocking this in the Little Theatre, so I ended up coming in on my day off and met up with my stage manager. We laid down red tape to represent the triangle stage in the Little Theatre and in the Old Gym venue. We talked props list and how to get parents on board to help. Melanie Carrillo, our costumer came in to organize the costume closet. We talked about the concept and she got busy finding photographs with her iPad2. Basically, we prepped for a busy fall and got the motor running of the stage management and costume designing. We also photocopied schedules and fee forms and made packets for the upcoming parent night.

15 September 2011

The parent night went very well. They appreciated having it the same evening as the Back-to-School night. It made their lives a bit easier. The parents signed up to donate cast

dinners and some even paid their cast fees already. We also got a couple donations. Yes.

In Advanced Theatre Arts class this week we are watching and discussing the DVD *Shakespeare Behind Bars*. These students have all performed in at least one Shakespeare production at school before. They are really into the idea of criminals doing Shakespeare. The conversations during class, after class and even after school have been stimulated by this intense documentary. Tomorrow we will be making lists about prison life based on this movie. This play is already teaching them so much. Next week they will present their projects about Bertolt Brecht, Sister Helen Prejean and the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

16 September 2011

Our leading roles met today to read through the script. We arranged tables so that we could sit in a large square formation and have our scripts on the table. We read and stopped often to discuss ideas. The students were insightful, they often just interjection comments that spurred discussions. Matt Pancoe remarked, "These scenes seem to have tension that is steady like a heart beat, then half way into the scenes it speeds up, just to stop and become a whole new scene some where else. It's like the heart machine at the hospital."

21 September 2011

I've been able to work with Anna-Lisa George on getting the Administration more on board with *Project: Discourse*. She is a former assistant principal and gives me insight to how the people above me function. We've drafted a detailed description of the preview days. I've decided to call it a Forum. The DMWPlay.org people told me that Tim Robbins has turned down our request to perform an 80 minute abridged version of the script, but has approved us to show

up to 35 minutes of the script. Anna-Lisa is pushing approval from Administration to modify the weekly schedule for *Project: Discourse*. By flipping Tuesday and Thursday schedules that week, we can have every student attend a Forum.

Our first two blocking rehearsals have gone well. Instead of dictating when and where the cast moves, I have taken a more improvisational approach. We began with physical warm-ups and then read the pages of script out loud while standing. I had the students walk over to the character they were addressing and make eye contact while reading. Bryana Corza stood on a chair and addressed every one in the room. We used animal movement exercises in which the Montoya character decided to be a cat so that she can better pursued Prejean. Casey tried alligator movements during his monologue, he added push-ups and then was very slow in movement as he guarded himself in his first conversations with Prejean.

At 5:00pm, Casey asked the cast to join him in prayer. He led a touching prayer for Troy Davis, a death row inmate who was being put to death in Georgia. Casey asked the Lord to help Troy's soul to move on and for the families involved to find peace soon.

23 September 2011

I've decided to only have the roles that speak at the panel board hearing scene at rehearsal today. The ensemble can be worked into the scene on October 12. I really want to spend time with Megan Deussenberry to define her character of Hilton Barber. There is a strong message of feminism in this play. Having the "good" lawyer be a strong female adds to the message. Megan also has a reading challenge, so I want it to just be her scene partners until we get her off-book and on her feet. We will be working the short scene in which Hilton first speaks to the prisoner and then the banter at the pardon board with the other lawyer.

24 September 2011

Yesterday was very productive, Megan got to a point where she was able to understand the capitol punishment speech. We talked about having a calm approach to win over people and then to amp up the intensity with each monologue. Her scene partner, Sean Hunter, is very smart and comes off well as her opponent.

Today was one of the few times in which the old gym was empty. Most days after school dancing teams have rehearsals 2:30 to as late as 9:00pm. Weekends, the space is usually booked for basketball tournaments, etc. Since we previously taped out my idea for the stage, we were able to use our time effectively. When cast members showed up they rolled one of our stairways and two of our stage platforms from storage to be set-up like on the groundplan. Students set-up some chairs to mark the front row of audience. It was a wake up call for the actors, they realized the two audiences that I had been describing. We decided where the center of each audience was so that they knew where to place certain focal points. I am so glad we got today to try the already blocked scenes in the space. I took some pictures of this rehearsal. The panel board hearing became a scene in which the lawyers argue towards the audiences in an effort to win them over. Sean and Megan have exchanged phone numbers so that they can run their overlapping dialogue outside of rehearsal time. It's complicated, but I think it will be awesome if they can master it.

27 September 2011

The parent meetings the last two Tuesdays were effective. Most Parents have turned in their cast fees and added some extra for donating to show expenses. They have also signed up to

provide cast meals later on. I was worried some parents might not be on board with this production due to the controversial subject matter. Although we are a Catholic School, not everyone takes the church's stance on the issue.

Today we tried Shadowing technique at rehearsal. It was tricky at first, the students thought they needed to call "Line," to feed the line. I had to model how to shadow, emphasizing that you stand directly behind them and whisper the lines just before they are to say them. It eventually caught on and the students were able to use gestures and make eye contact with their partners because they did not have scripts in their hands. Some of the pairings for shadows were ironic. Casey shadowed for Sean during the pardon board, in which Sean is asking for the panel to kill Casey's character. The irony was fun. I had the nuns shadow each other when possible, Joanna said it helped he grasp the character more. I liked it because we were able to review 33 pages of blocking with ease. It was also great the cast was able to find some new moments and pictures because they were not reading. It's like we expedited a huge part of a normal rehearsal process. The cast and I agreed to continue to use shadowing until the lines are down.

29 September 2011

We were able to quickly block an intense moment between Delacroix and Prejean, and then we went back and ran the first 38 pages with out stopping. I gave me a better idea of pacing, which is a huge worry. This show can feel slow, but these dedicated young people have a spark that keeps it moving. We used shadowing again and it worked very well. The kids afterwards shared that they think it is helping them get their lines down. Some said it allows them to attach the words to an action and therefore they recall it easier. I'm so glad I learned this technique last summer at CWU, it and so many other things I've brought back to my theatre program have

worked beautifully.

I am glad I have decided to use the Dead kid characters more often. The ghosts of Walter and Hope appear only a couple of times throughout Robbins' script. The first time is on page 34. Embracing Elise's advice last summer to make the show "as theatrical as possible and to give the audience something they can't experience in a movie theatre" got me going with ghosts. I've decided to have them sit in the lower front of the audiences from the beginning of the play. They represent teenagers, so I sat them in the audience of teenagers. When they stand to talk to Prejean during her first vision/flashback sequence, it is surreal.

While blocking p. 37 & 38, I felt the ghost of Walter should mosey through the room as his living father describes parts of it. However, it was difficult for me to express this. First we blocked the scene with Matt Dallal and Joanna Cornejo, we decided where the pantomimed door would be and the placement of the furniture. I told stage management that I want only one picture frame the whole show. It should be empty so that it represents all of the dead characters whose pictures are mentioned. When the frame is touched or spoken about, an image of the child is projected onto the big screen. So Matt and Joanna ran the scene through a couple of times and then we ran all 38 pages. At the end I said, "Matt let's do the scene at your house again. However, this time . . .". I got choked up, couldn't speak. The thought of this kid really being killed and his father talking about it devastated me. So Matt Dallal started his monologue and I went over to Matt Yopez who plays Walter and non-verbally instructed him to stand and walk up the stairs and then cross the room while his father spoke. Our rehearsal room was silent, Matt Dallal cried while he spoke his lines, it was intense. We knew we had created something special. I am glad I choose to use the ghosts more. It has given the play more.

30 September 2011

The presentations in class were wonderful. My students obviously did their homework. Their projections about the Sisters of St. Joseph and Bertolt Brecht were very insightful. I am proud of these kids for committing to our show so much. The Advanced Theatre Arts class has always been responsible for working on the shows and for making them happen. This year is different. They are educating themselves during class about the play and then applying their new knowledge in rehearsals. They are proud to share their discoveries with the cast members who aren't in the class. They want to pass on what they know to their peers.

5 October 2011

I'm glad I only scheduled five pages of script to block today. These two scenes are full of mounting tension and very tricky for young cast members. The scene in which the Chaplain intimidates Sister Prejean was handled delicately because I can't have the Chaplain come off too much of a bad guy. My Catholic audience needs a priest character to be good, plus Matt Pancoe's uncle is a priest. However, the men who work at the prison in this play do come off as enemies of Prejean. We eventually nailed it when Matt pretended to be a snake wrapping around Joanna as the mouse. It made her vulnerable and him seductive. At one point they broke out laughing because it did get a little steamy, which is totally not right. When we got stuck in a rut, I decide to have them go back and perform the first Chaplain and Sister scene, then we went back to this one and it was better. The two actors realized the arc their characters needed.

The other scene we spent an hour on, which was great. We usually have way too many people at rehearsal, it was nice just diving into two people scenes today. We address the other scene as Race/Rain now. Melissa is going to have students find rain cues on their iPad2 and get

an umbrella for Joanna to come with. I like having scenes with weather because it heightens the tension and provides a sense of surprise. The dialogue speaks of it raining, now our sound, lights, props & movement will speak of it too.

This is the only outdoor scene in Act 1, so I needed to change the set somewhat. By placing a long bench in the center of the stage, it allowed Sister Prejean to face one audience, and for Matt Poncelet to face the other. Casey and I played with when to stand, when to look at her and when to turn a back on her. This simple non-conventional set-up (the bench) allowed us a lot to play with. We spoke about triggers for each other. Robbins' wrote a great scene in which Prejean wins over Poncelet's ignorance. Although our busy schedule rarely allows us a whole hour to explore one scene, I am so glad I chose to spend it on this scene. It is a major turning point in their relationship and it confronts a controversial topic.

6 October 2011

Today we explored the Percy family scene. There is a lot to the scene. It could be an excellent ten-minute play. It feels like one. It starts with the parents speaking to audience, similar to Prejean on a speaking tour, but then it becomes them talking with Prejean over coffee. Since it really introduces the crime from the victims families point of view, I have my Theatre class finding projections to go along with the monologues. I decided to make their house long so that the tension with the little sister can be more awkward. We tried to find a way in which the ghost of Hope can meander into their scene. It didn't work having her on the couch the whole time, nor having her behind the coffee table, so we ended up playing with the idea of her watching from the lower level stage and then entering during the beat change when the Percy's attack Prejean. It worked, it allows for the beat change to develop instead of coming out of nowhere (which seems

to happen in this text to often). We liked when the actress decided to take a blanket and cover up her sister on the couch bench.

11 October 2011

Yesterday was my husband's birthday. I spoiled us with two nights in La Quinta (in the desert). The relaxation was good for us. It cleared my mind of anxiety. Although I thought about the play and saw pictures, it was lounging poolside during the desert off-season. It wasn't work, rather just seeing images in head finally come to a possible staging.

Today we drove back home before the mid-day heat. All afternoon I finally worked. I had promised him no work while in La Quinta. Now at home with better focus, I was able to sketch some ideas for Act 2. I really enjoy how our rehearsals have an organic way of staging. I've been picking an area and having the kids create pictures in it. Act 2 poses a potentially big problem. Tim Robbin's stage directions at the top indicate "The death house. The look of these scenes is different than the previous scenes" (Robbins 55).

We have been using a limited amount of furniture and lots of imagination to create the Act 1 locations. Remaining options are limited. The elevated stage creates the problem of getting a death bed onstage for the execution. I've decide to keep it simple.

The two longer benches that represent cells in Act 1, will be more prominent downstage. The small bench used for the couch in the Act 1 will be on the lower level sticking out perpendicular from the real gym stage at center. I believe simply turning one of the three benches will allow my actors to believe/see new hallways, corridors and rooms for Act 2. It will also cause them to walk straight lines and make angled turns to get around the benches. There was circle feel to my movement in Act 1, this act will incorporate more walking in lines. Most Act 1

rooms seemed to have more than one then one way to get out of the room. The courtroom scene had four entrances, the houses had front door and halls and kitchens as places for characters to enter/exit from. This Act will take a mostly different approach. There is one way for visitors to the get to the death house. There are confined areas in which a character has to back the way the came. The most open scene is the Family Scene, it will have a large area between the seated family members to represent the distance between them in general. The three benches transform in various ways to create most of Act 2. The execution will have two benches angled with their upstage legs up on the two foot-high coffee table that was the Act 1 Sister Prejean Bed. I will have the facilities department re-enforce the legs on the coffee table. The benches will create a cross symbol in the middle of the stage for the loss of Matt Poncelet. We will keep him their through the final moments of the play as if the execution table is now a coffin. I created many silly sketches of my ideas. They are say all be all for the scenes, but now I'm ready to block act two next week.

13 October 2011

As the kids put together their student-directing showcase, *ShortsFest*, Melanie was in the costume closet. Throughout the afternoon she would show me some costume options. Because most of our cast was waiting for their chance with the stage, Melanie was able to do some preliminary fittings. I am really liking the direction she is going with the costumes. They are instantly recognizable as certain professions and personalities. It is following my concept of colorful community and black/white system. She is good at this and is having fun. I have never seen this many potential costume choices, nor had fittings so far ahead of dress rehearsals. Its great. I need to plan for this to happen earlier on all future productions.

The twelve minute preview of DMW is going to work tomorrow at *ShortsFest*. It is simple, but works. The story is alive.

14 October 2011

The *ShortsFest* event was the perfect place to begin our advertising for *Dead Man Walking*. Our Little Theatre was filled about 100 parents all excited to see their children perform student direct scenes and monologues at this casual variety event. After prayer, I introduced the event by describing the exciting upcoming opportunities for students this season. I also explained that all box office and concession sales from *ShortsFest* will be put into the budget for *Dead Man Walking*. I then told them there would be a twelve minute teaser of *Dead Man Walking* before intermission. "If the teaser so moves you to increase your support of the production, please come visit me at intermission."

The teaser ran very smoothly. The cast was in character, their portrayals were convincing and they elicited responses from the audience. A first for *ShortsFest*; at the end of the teaser the audience gave a standing ovation. During intermission, it was obvious the parents were moved. Not only were many crying, but some gave me very large checks. We expected to raise \$800 through this event, but we actually raised \$4,250 to put towards *Dead Man Walking*. Most important though, our show has a good buzz now. The cast is confident, the audience is anxious to see the whole production next month. I'm so glad we performed a preview at *ShortsFest*.

18 October 2011

Since *ShortsFest*, PSAT testing, Homecoming and other things are now out of our way, we need to get this show moving! We open one month from today. This afternoon I will be blocking the

final moments of Act 1. I am annoyed by Tim Robbins. He doesn't get High School theatre, but has written a play to be performed at a high school. He has given some short monologues to characters in the support group scene, we call it "The Grievors Scene". So it's nice he gave some lines to some kids to perform, but then his stage directions ask for these to overlap. I can't do that. Their parents want to see/hear them perform these monologues. This afternoon, I will try to find a way for the monologues to be spoken separately and then repeated in an overlap. It's the end of an Act so I need it to build to a boil.

19 October 2011

It worked yesterday, the counseling scene is awesome. I had the cast speak their monologues to the whole room as if the audience is in the support group too. We speak everything in order up to Delacroix's last line in the scene. Then the students repeat their monologues but walk outwards so that the audience is seeing them speak, but hearing overlapping voices in pain. The kids repeat their monologues over and over until Matt Dallal yell's "We are nothing special." This happened organically during yesterday's rehearsal. When he first did it, the actors all went silent and awkwardly turned to look at him, then spontaneously they moved towards center and held each-other in a group hug. I've decided to keep it, it works.

Today, I have decided to deviate from the schedule a bit. We need to make a big Act 1 ending. I want the support group hug to be interrupted by protestors and then the stage just morphs into the Act 1 execution. I want chaos and images, shadow work of a lethal injection and then end with a special on Matt Poncelet crying like a scared boy in his cell.

20 October 2011

It worked! Our ending to Act 1 took some time to develop, but it's awesome. I asked the kids yesterday to decide if their character was for or against the death penalty. Then we staged a protest in which angry community people will carry protest sign in favor of the death penalty. Those against the death penalty learned to sing Kumbaya while Varsity basketball player Eli Stalzer plays a version of it on live piano. He made it sound weird by transposing it into a different key, it know is haunting.

We ran all of Act 1 today, with some shadowing, and made it to the end. I am very happy with the way in which we tell most of Act 1. Tomorrow we will run it again in the Little Theatre.

Next week, we have got to dive into Act 2.

21 October 2011

Finally. We can now use our iPad2s the way we thought we were going to be able to use them to communicate with students. At several Tech Committee meetings, we discussed the possibility of using Blackboard for our classes. For some reason it wasn't approved, instead we are stuck with something called Aeries. It sucks. We have been needing a place to post documents, allow students to blog and turn-in homework. An English teacher obtained an account for website called Edmodo. It's great. We can now post rehearsal schedules, notes and more for the cast. It even does polls. Although I'm learning as I go, I will start using Edmodo for my Advanced Theatre Arts class and for the *Dead Man Walking* cast.

24 October 2011

Our cast has come up with a warm-up ritual for every rehearsal. I combines stretching,

breathing, improvisation and bonding. The ritual ends with some notes by the Stage Manager or by the Director and then we finish with prayer. They gear up, we tell them the plan for the day and then we pray together. It kind of happened naturally because I had been leading warm-ups and then leading cast members started taking over. Now it is was it is and it works well.

31 October 2011

While in a board meeting, my supervisor Assistant Principle Kevin Hickman emailed me for a *Project: Discourse* update. My response helped me put the growing event into a summarized perspective (Appendix C). The course is charted, the destination is achievable now. The obstacles hurled at the production over summer (school time performances changing, the tunnel vision on iPad2, etc) are now behind us. I believe the Forums, Guest Speaker Panels and show itself will work.

The obstacles in the next few weeks include venue management. There is a Red Cross Blood Drive in the gym and a Dance Team recital. We don't really get to load-in until just three days before the first forum, five days before opening. It's a crazy up hill climb, but I think my team is going to come through. Anna-Lisa has the school teaching lessons in classrooms. She and I are fine tuning the idea of the 80 minute education forums for all students to attend during English classes. These will be part entertainment, part presentations, part participation via iPad2, all adding up to be impact full discourse. Larry Sharp is promising things for lights, Adrian Noack of MEI is understanding my needs more. Melanie Carrillo is almost done shopping and borrowing costumes. Melissa Jacobson is getting the kids to be a crew. Their transitions are flowing better. The idea of simply moving a bench to create a new environment is becoming believable because of the students' buy-in. Catherine Wilson's student designs are in the process

of being manufactured onto postcards and t-shirts. Our school mass phone call system will advertise the event next week to all of the Mater Dei parents and our tumblr blog is gaining momentum. I wanted all of this happen, had times when I thought it wouldn't, but for now, the journey is going somewhere worthwhile.

3 November 2011

We carved out sometime today to go over the live music cues with Mackin Carroll and Eli Stalzer. Mackin is on the varsity Cross-Country team and Eli is a varsity basket-ball team. They are very busy, but I know they are very talented musicians. They shared their ideas for live music during scenes and during transitions. They composed music for guitar and piano inspired by other songs. Their versions are awesome. When these guys can be at rehearsals they will play their cues on their instruments from now on. That way they will be able to handle the challenges of accompanying a live performance with ease.

A tricky part of the soundtrack is the music created on Garage Band by the Advanced Theatre Arts students. Much like with the Edmodo problem, we have another iPad2 snafu. Our department was required to teach all Performing Arts students in class how to compose music with the Garage Band App. My students were worried at first but soon got really into it back in September. I made it a homework assignment to compose 45 seconds of music that could be used in *Dead Man Walking*. They were to identify the page in the script and describe what mood their composition was trying to create. They got excited when I told them I would pick one of the compositions to use in *Dead Man Walking*. By the end of October I had some great selections and have decided on six to use. The snafu is that the way we have configured each student's iPad2 has disabled the possibility of them sharing the music they create. At tech and for the real

shows, we will be plugging in and removing six iPad2s to make the recorded music happen.

One of the coolest things about the music is that Mackin Carroll was able to listen to a composition created on a peer's iPad2 and then began playing it on his guitar. We will have a piece of live music performed that was based on a student created composition.

5 November 2011

This morning was our last time getting to use the Monarch Pavilion (old gym) to rehearse our show until tech on Sunday November 13. I made this an all day rehearsal so that we could finish blocking and creating Act 2 in the actual performance space. We hauled out our staircase and stage piece, used the actual benches and other furniture. We ended up being able to get it all done and run Act 2. It went surprisingly smooth. I believe because the students know the importance of using the actual space. We can work on the emotions back in the Little Theatre (locker room) all week. But here today, we can figure out just how long it takes to cross and where to place items.

Two things really made today special.

1. Our cast got to bond over our first meal break of the production schedule that was provided by cast parents. They got together and set up a pasta lunch spread in the teacher's cafeteria. I only had to unlock the door and provide plates/forks/etc from our supply cupboard. At lunch we were together, but away from our toils. At the end of it I was able to speak with the cast about my expectations for the rest of the day. They stepped up their focus and retention skills.
2. Veronica Valencia saying prayer. She had done her homework. Veronica made today's rehearsal prayer be a prayer for the souls of the boy and girl that were killed on November 5 1977. She remarked that our story exists because of their tragedy. Students cried during

Veronica's lovely tribute.

8 November 2011

This week my students in class are involved in a Process Drama about capitol punishment. All over campus students are involved in exercises about this topic so it is fitting that we do something in our classroom too. This Process Drama was created by Michelle Wilden and I two summers ago at CWU in Elise's Curriculum Development class. My students are totally into the idea of staying in character and preparing for a mock press conference.

13 November 2011

It's very late. I'm worn out. Somehow the show will have to happen.

Earlier, at 7:30a.m. I arrived at MDHS to get our show loaded in. The Dance Recital from the night before had not been struck so I got some facilities crew members and we quickly removed 300 chairs and trash. By 8:00a.m. the MEI crew arrived and started setting up the house platforms. The steel deck is very heavy and dangerous. The students were not permitted to enter the old gym until after MEI left in the afternoon.

My husband, the greatest helper in the world, made so much happen today. While MEI worked, Derek hung grey fabric up and took red drapes down. He helped me with installing our fabric for around the projection screen. We had the regular amount of problems to solve with MEI as the morning went on. Missing from the picture was my lighting engineer Larry Sharp. Let light plot was not hanging, nor programmed so that I could begin cueing the show. This was a major drawback that could really have an effect on this week.

When the cast arrived in the afternoon they were filled with emotion. Our little play just got big on them. We worked all transitions, live music moments and continued to prepare the

space for our show. Late in the evening Robert Conrad arrived to set up his equipment. He is such a great guy to have on a show. He gets it.

14 November 2011

Through out the school day I worked with Larry Sharp on designing the lights. It went very slow because he now had large steel platforms in his way. It was difficult to move the lift around the venue to get to the lights. He took a major shortcut on our idea to have designated areas on the stage for pools of light. I wanted to be able to bring up the pools of light to create the various moments in the script. Instead, Larry used two intelligent moving lights borrowed from the new athletic center to create the light pools. The problem is that now we can only have one light pool on at a time. This sucks.

The biggest surprise of the day came at 3:00p.m. when varsity football palyer David Thompson showed up and asked to help. He told me, "Due to Thanksgiving, coach is allowing me to do my Theatre class duty this week." David ended up saving the day. In less than two hours, David and I were able to program thirty five looks for the show that could work in tangent for about 90% of the show. He is smarter than he lets people know. I would call out channels, he would bring them up and program it as a cue. The funky half intelligent lights and half old school lamps on a separate system mess is awful. I am so glad David is sharp and willing to be our light operator. This was a turning point for David and I. Back in September I had a heart to heart with him about his lack of effort and poor behavior. He revealed to me that an administrator had said something very hurtful to him once and so he doesn't like school. Today though, David was enjoying learning and eager to try.

The dress/tech rehearsal went ok, the show is starting to feel like how it is going to end

up being. It's not everything I imagined, but many aspects of my vision are present. The costumes look great, the actors are on it and the guards are making their transitions believable. The sound is funky. Robert is experimenting with audio levels and line arrays to help combat the acoustic problems in the space. He is a little annoyed with my student who is charge of coming up with microphone pass-off list. She doesn't have it done yet and is making last minute choices that do not work. She should have attended more rehearsals and the ones she was she could have paid better attention. I'll talk with her tomorrow and find her some assistance. Although the tech days are so filled with problems, I love it. It challenges my creativity. I like to use improvisational skills to solve all sorts of problems. True theatre is in the moment. Because we have charted our course so in depth on this production, I am finding it easier to roll with the production week punches. The added pressure this week though are the Forums. Our first one is on Wednesday morning and here I am too busy putting a show together. Yikes.

17 November 2011

I am proud of this cast and all adults on board. Somehow we showed up at 6:30 am and most left school at 6:30pm. Those twelve hours included two Forum performances, a catered lunch meal, professional Yearbook photos and our final dress rehearsal.

It ran smoothly for the most part. Afterwards we worked the exits of the cast during the post execution monologue. It's a long monologue so I have been distracting from it by trying different times for the characters to mass exit. Nothing has worked, so today we tried the cast dropping their characters for second, breaking the fourth wall and turning to listen to monologue. After the monologue most exit the space as students. We have Jacob DeBilio (Percy) pass off his microphone to Monique Nguyen by the piano area to expedite her entrance with the boot box.

We also had a short note session.

The kids running the sound are messing up the recorded cues and songs. The microphone pass offs didn't work as well as during the forums. It's my fault really, we have been performing two versions of the show (Forum and real play) so they pass offs are different. Since we don't have a Forum tomorrow, and our sound crew is assessing their plans, my hope is it improves for opening night. In Advanced Theatre Arts class we will solve this with the cast and crew, then post the pass-off lists everywhere. Robert Conrad is excellent at balance sound for bad venues. His work on my *Shakespeare in the Grotto* events has been impressive, however, this is his first time in the gym. If my kids can get the right kid to where the correct microphone, I know the amplification issues will improve. Knowing high school theatre though, it won't be perfect opening night, but will improve throughout our run.

I never say much after the final dress rehearsal. I know it's too late to implement much change and too many notes can make a cast lose their confidence. I gave them a pep talk about how special tomorrow will be. They attend a speaker panel as a student in their religion class. After school or at lunch they come speak with the lawyers and Sisters or St. Josef that are speaking. But I need them to get sleep tonight, hug their parents and be ready to move an audience tomorrow night. Casey Brecher stepped up after my notes and expressed his love for our cast. It was moving that our leading actor was thanking his peers, cheering on the ensemble and crew. I had worried about his ego with being the starring role, however his heart is in the right place. He is obsessed with being good, but tonight he reflected on the journey and expressed his appreciation.

19 November 2011

Yesterday was a success. All 2,068 students attended a powerful guest panel hosted by our religion department. Our cast identified with Sister Susan Baher of the Sisters of St. Josef. It was incredible panel that happened seven times through out the day. All I had to do was introduce the guests and deliver prayer. This allowed me time to enjoy the panel and to get things ready for opening night. I am so happy that religion teacher Dorinda Upham was so on board with this year's *Project: Discourse*. Her planning and implementing of a panel discussion was wonderful.

Our cast parents and fellow faculty members helped transform the gym after school from speaker panel day (500 chairs, filled center section some this time) into our theatre. We made the two audience sections have only 150 chairs each. This allowed for more leg room. The groundplan designed by MEI last month was for the Forums in which we needed 400 chairs. My expectation for audience has always been maximum 250 people at any of the three shows. So I set-up 300 chairs and printed up 300 chairs per show.

At 7:00pm, we had a good problem. The 300 tickets had sold, so my secretary was now selling raffle tickets as tickets and we were up 360. The Dean supervisor thought he was solving the problem by setting up chairs in the empty middle section, not knowing that was a playing area. I was able to get my Prison Guards to re-seat these patrons elsewhere.

However, for tonight's performance I will lay down red tape to indicate the limits.

I will also set-up 400 chairs. This play has become mighty popular.

Just before opening house, a could be disaster hit. My light board operator, football player and now theatre artist David Thompson informed me about a potential problem with the light board. I gave him some ideas to try while speaking with Elise in my office. We then went

into the venue and I showed Elise some aspects of the space. David came up to me five minutes before house open to tell me the fixes didn't work. I excused myself from Elise and went up to the tech platform. Each night this week I had operated the turning on and off of Larry Sharp's complicated computer routing of the intelligent lights, the lights I never wanted. For some reason we could not get them to remain on for more than two minutes. I called over my friend choir teacher Scott Melvin who uses Larry Sharp on many choir concerts and experiences this all the time. He called Larry's phone as David ran the board and computers. This allowed me to approach the cast onstage who had just finished warm-ups and prayer. I gave them a brief pep-talk, encouraging them to keep their focus and to use their problem solving skills. As I was speaking the moving lights came on and I felt like crises averted. Turns out Larry Sharp programmed a new cue with the lights for the guest speakers. When David erased the new cue everything went back to normal. I am really proud of David. He started his senior year with a bad attitude and poor work ethic. In the past week he has mastered the light board and cues amazingly well for some one that had not touched a light board five days ago.

The play happened. It did, it actually did. Some how, an energetic, packed and enthusiastic audience came. There was a buzz in air. Our preview forums had stoked interest. The Catholic community was interested. The CAPPIES kids were there to write reviews. One critic from the CETA, California Educational Theatre Association, was in attendance.

The gym felt like an artistic and educational venue. I'm happy with the pace, tempo and rhythm of the play. So much of our performance worked. I could see member of the opposing audience engaged in the action through out the lengthy show. It is the longest play I've ever directed, however it sailed by.

There was a long snag at the end though. It was my fault for not committing to the

placement of the mass exit after the execution. It threw off the final moments from our original plan and made the switching of the two Prejeans not work at all. However when Delacroix and Prejean prayed and the lights darkened as the cross was illuminated above, I felt the whole audience. There was a warmth, a common sigh, a feeling of, "Yes".

What was really special was the support I had. I was comforting having Elise here from CWU, Tracey Gallagher and Mark Daniels attended the show with my husband. Our good friends Joani and Dave sat next to me. They are an older artsy couple who lost their only son to a drug overdose. Throughout the show, Joani held onto my hand and sobbed. It spoke to her and her life. It was special to share my work with her. The hugs from my husband, our friends, cast parents and Elise after the show is a big memory for me to hold onto.

20 November 2011

A day off! Finally. Needed. Said good-bye to Mark. Watched movies in the rain with Derek all day. Thought about the show and decided that I feel good about it.

Last night's performance was less attended than opening night. I'm mad about it. Earlier in the week, our Administration Board approved a last minute fundraiser for the basketball teams. Last night they held an event in which our teams played teams of young celebrities including actors from Nickelodeon, MTV, upcoming *Chronicles* and *Hunger Games* movies. It's ridiculous being a big name sports school in southern California sometimes. My secretary and I figured out why opening night was so packed, kids bought tickets for Friday so that they could go see celebrities in our new gym on Saturday. If anything, I think I better prepare for a large crowd on the Tuesday night closer.

Due to this we only had about 100 people on each side of the audience, mostly adults

who enjoyed the leg room. A CETA judge attended. The show felt more grown-up. The audience seemed to hold onto their emotional responses more than teenagers do. However, I thought it was better than opening night. Light cues were correct, the microphones were up before the actor's first syllables which made it worked better.

The ending went as I had planned; it worked. When the dialogue Prejean placed the box of Poncelet's boots into the narrator Prejean's hands, the audience was silent. It was moving for some reason. There was a long silence after the light went onto the cross. The first group of actors to bow did not receive applause until they bowed. The audience had been soaking emotions during the end. It was strong.

I am so thankful for all the many adults and children who have made this production possible. It is an honor to direct something like this at this school. It's important.

23 November 2011

I just dropped off the dry-cleaning. MEI just finished picking up their steel deck and screen. The Monarch Pavilion looks like a gym again. Except for the Black and Grey Legs hanging from the first batten. I'm leaving it there because it makes our stage look better than the red curtains. It also blocks the offstage sight lines more. This stage will be used for speaker presentations and our upcoming first annual Performing Arts Showcase on Jan 25. The simple black and grey fabric helps.

Yesterday will live in my heart. Our final two Forums and Closing Night Show were great. My inlaws, Derek's parents Pam & Mike came to first forum of the day at 9:00 am. While the audience typed on iPads, they wrote on paper. After, Derek took them south orange county to some beach town probably for fun, but whatever I was having deep fun at my school and it was

cool his parents cared to be a part of the forum. They support the teacher part of me as much as my theatre parts.

The National Coordinator for Dead Man Walking School Project, Greg Callaghan, came to our final Forum. He was every enthusiastic about the Forum, he wants to use us as an example for future productions. He shared a letter that Helen Prejean wrote and signed for us.

Apparently, we are now the 210th production produced. He spent the afternoon with Allison from Advancement then came to my office an hour before last show. We had a pleasant casual conversation about the potential of theatre in schools. I like him, he is devoted to Sister Helen Prejean and he “gets” kids. Greg is a good coordinator for their organization. He understands that I directed this play for my Masters degree and has been supportive through out.

Greg has been supportive when I have called him about changing items in the script. Mostly, imagery I needed to create for my production. He has allowed our interpretation of the end of Act 1, from Grievors to Execution. Since we included it in the Forum, he already knew how it is live. He admitted he worried that I could confuse the ending more, because most productions he has seen either cut the end our just show a couple girls with candles. However, he was very complimentary about our building to tension boil approach. He loved that the ensemble members who now speak at the counseling session more than once. The overlapping monologues started the boiling process. The inclusion and Brechtian use of the Pro-Death characters got to him emotionally and made the end of the act feel like an ending. During a brief chat after the show, he could not stop raving about the use of two Prejeans. He said it’s the first time he has seen it done this way. Apparently, some school on videotape from before his employment has an old Prejean and young Prejean, but was not effective. Greg floored me when he told me his report to Tim Robbins would approve other schools to use my choices of what lines the Prejean get. He

saw the show in which my Prejean switch-a-roo really worked. That had him wild. He feels that Prejean wants all of us to be a bit more like her, and that we should allow more girls to play her. I can't wait to hear from Allison what he says to her. Oh, to wallow in good responses! I've learned to enjoy compliments when you get them.

The afternoon between last Forum and last show, gave me a chance to enjoy some Thai food with my costumer Melanie and stage manager Melissa. It was a chance for the original team, we go way *Anne Frank*, to reflect and enjoy the success.

Once back at school, it became a glorious business running the final show and strike. The next day was beginning of Thanksgiving break, so tonight was special. Or so it felt when over 650 (we lost count) people attended our show. We accommodated them all and were able to handle seating issues. Our fall shows for 20+ years have played Thurs, Fri and close Saturday before the Thanksgiving week.

I took a risk, I wanted to end our *Project: Discourse* with a full length production of the whole show that started the discourse. It feels like the proper way to end.

When my Admin approved then couldn't accommodate the original school day plan, we punted (because we are at a sports school) and we kept our eye on the ball, dodged dilemmas, struggled past hardships and united to achieve our goal.

Holding a Tuesday night performance at the beginning of Thanksgiving Break, brought some thing home to us . . . alumni!!! It was so wonderful sharing our important production with former students who had just flown home for break. By Tuesday afternoon, every English class had attended the powerful Forums. So many non-Performing Arts Students showed up, not for extra-credit, but because they wanted to. We had inspired them to. A CETA judge attended and so did some important MDHS people who usually do not. There was something important that

some many high up Administration members wanted to spend the first night of vacation by supporting our show. It was an honor to have President Patrick Murphey deliver the evening's prayer and to shake his hand and to see his tears after the show. I think my art is what is going to get full support on future endeavors. They trust my skills and allow me to be creative, it's annoying they impede my progress on fulfilling my vision sometimes/often, but maybe I need to teach them more. It's ok, teaching is something that I can do.

Devotion, Sacrifice, Death. Our play has a chance to live on at CETA festival if chosen to be #1 in the OC. But still our strike did dampen the mood for some. However, I was so proud of the kids efforts to pile the audience chairs, strip down all advertise and artwork, prepare dry cleaning and wash piles, etc. In under an hour lots was done, the gym was ready for MEI to tear down their items in the morning, Larry Sharp can retrieve the new gyms intelligent lights over Thanksgiving Break. The show is gone in there.

Next week my students will turn in their reflections. And we decorate, cast, block, run & perform the annual Nativity Advent Performance. The next event is nigh.

28 November 2011

Spent the day cleaning up the Little Theatre and organizing bills. I attended the meetings I get to attend as Director of Performing Arts. The best part was Block 4 with my theatre kids. They came into the room wanting to work. They cleaned up the backstage passage way and returned it to being a Choir Storage room. They organized the random closets in the Little Theatre and ripped up tape off the Old Gym floor that was hidden under the MEI audience platforms. Our taped out lines ended up matching the MEI diagram.

Our show was a success because we were prepared. This production was a smoother

operation to pull off than some of my previous efforts. I believe the preparation Central Washington University Theatre classes in the summer and this Creative Project have organized me to make things happen. I had a great crew of adults and students, they made our journey so special.

11 January 2012

“The Band is Back Together!” shouted Matt Pancoe as we were getting the Little Theatre ready for our guests. We decided to remount the twelve minute teaser for the visiting Parish Youth Ministers. The students set-up folding chairs, stage pieces and cleaned. We were able to do a run-thru with David Thompson making up effective light cues with the clip lights in the room. Eli Stalzer decided he would play the *How to Save Life* melody at the beginning and the distorted *Lord’s Prayer* at the end. I decided to make this presentation about how a Parish Youth Program could use the script of *Dead Man Walking* as a way of facilitating discussions. So my cast wore their jeans and show shirts just like the first we presented the teaser at the ShortsFest event in October. We had the same small stage set-up with levels and minimal furniture. This time we had the show banner across the front.

I greeted the 30 Youth Leaders with an opening speech about the cross-curricular experience we had when we produced the play in November. While the cast performed the teaser, I felt proud. We have come a long way. The teaser was very powerful back in October, but it now had a depth that comes from the cast better knowing their characters. They also know the power this play has on an audience and how to effectively make that happen. The Youth Ministers leapt to their feet with applause and tears. Several thanked us for inspiring them to try some drama with their Youth groups.

13 January 2012

Servite High School is supposed to be our enemy. Their football team defeated us the past three years. Whatever.

The annual CETA High School Festival is being held at Servite High School for the first time ever. I'm glad, because I want my kids to see theatres at the other Catholic Schools. I want them to explore and participate. This festival is awesome because about two thousand really dedicated theatre students and teachers get together for three days to perform and experience. The play presented tonight is the one we lost to. Turns out in Orange County, we got 4th place for *Dead Man Walking*. I still blame the lame judge that gave us a 72, while the other judges both gave us 94. Whatever. So 1st place was this show, a great version of Ken Ludwig's *Leading Ladies* for our neighbors in Huntington Beach. The *Dead Man Walking* kids at intermission said they were over their resentment, because they loved this show, so all is good. It also turns out two directors I really respect got 2nd and 3rd place with their productions of *Diviners*. Later in the festival my kids will get to see snippets of those shows. The healing process with CETA is happening, my kids are having a great time sharing their love for theatre with kids from other schools statewide at something at our rivals' school. It's all good.

Just before the show tonight, they showed "trailers" of shows from Orange County schools. My students didn't know that I had our MDTV students create a trailer for us using the footage from our closing night play. It had the song *How to Save a Life* and student Will Gauthier edited together certain dialogue to a very powerful effect. I noticed the my kids crying while watching the trailer for the first time. The large audience was silent and then erupted in cheers, it was a wild moment for us.

After the show ended, the Orange County Awards were announced. Eleven Mater Dei

students received Acting Certificates for their performances in *DMW*. Most of winners were there to receive them, the other kids I had with us were cheering them on. Although our play didn't win Best Play for Orange County and get to perform at this festival, my kids know they have accomplished much. They know Sister Helen's story and they feel validated. Last year we received four certificates, this is an improvement for sure.

16 January 2012

At the close of the CETA Festival, the major awards were announced. The Best Play for LA, OC, Santa Barbra, San Diego and Palm Springs counties was *Leading Ladies* from OC. They received a trip to the State Capitol to represent at the California Youth in Theatre Day in March. The Best Trailer Award went to our school! The Judge said while presenting the award, "There has been one trailer that people keep asking me about this weekend. Everyone was moved by the ability of this trailer to remind us of the importance of live theatre in High Schools. The raw emotions exhibited in the trailer have made my students want to perform *Dead Man Walking* at our School."

We supported all the winners and the ceremony ended with the awards for two acting competitions that happened during the weekend festival. Matt Dallal, our Earl DeLacroix, won for Senior Scholarship Monologues and a trip to perform at the State Capitol. Then the award for Best Scene at Sceneworks and trip to the State Capitol for director and cast went to our Act 2 Scene 2 *The Tempest*. The of the three things chosen to represent CETA on California Youth in Theatre Day, two were from our school and one from the school we lost Best Play to. It was a victory for theatre in Orange County High Schools. It was the most awards we have ever won at festival, and it felt great. I can announce on Monday, "We competed at Servite and we won."

12 March 2012

We are in Sacramento tonight. Massimo Napoli, Alexa Vellanoweth and Matt Dallal get to perform for politicians tomorrow morning. These kids really had impact on *Dead Man Walking*, all three stepped up as leaders. Alexa and Matt would get the cast to focus during rehearsals, lead prayers and be a role model actor. Now that they are seniors, both starring in their Senior Musical and making history with a strong Improv team, it's nice that we get to get a day away from school for them to be honored. I had cast Massimo as the Governor in *DMW*, tomorrow he performs at the state capitol, it's pretty awesome.

13 March 2012 - California Youth in Theatre Day

This morning was incredible. While checking in at the Capitol, my students got to meet the heads of the California Educational Theatre Association, including Gai Jones, and see friends from other schools. I bumped into my friend Awele from CWU. She brought her students from San Francisco to perform a piece about civil rights. We discussed schedules and were able to see each other's performances.

At 9:00, two other Orange County teaching friends of mine met us at Senator Lou Correa's office. I had arranged with his aides to have the Senator lead us through a tour of the capitol. Fullerton Union Performing Arts High School students and their teacher Michael Despars along with Tri-School Catholic Theatre and teacher Hilary Pearson joined us on the fantastic tour. In the senate room we took pictures and received certificates from Senator Correa. It was an incredible honor.

Afterwards we met briefly with our Assemblyman Jose Solario, then changed into costumes for the *Tempest* scene. Our performance was very well received, and Matt's

monologue brought the audience to their feet. Our students received certificates from Lt. Governor Gavin Newsome, who is one of my heroes. Apparently Kevin Spacey ordered Chipotle for all students and teachers, so the free lunch was a nice surprise too.

At lunch, board members from CETA asked me to consider being the Private Schools Representative on the California Educational Theatre Association Board. All in all, today was historical for my Theatre program and it was an honor to be recognized for doing what we do.

I attended the CETA teacher's conference and workshops in Burlingame, California in October of 2008. The six hour workshop, *Producing the Dead Man Walking School Project*, taught by Sister Marie Fenlon has me geared up to bring a Catholic play to my Catholic School. Although I had previously seen the movie and attended the opera versions of this production, I did not have any desire to direct it, nor produce it with teenagers. It's because of CETA that I took my first step on this journey then CWU and MDHS helped me make it happen. Our success in CETA this year has been incredible. I am glad there are organizations that lift and support the arts and artists.

23 March 2012

All I keep thinking is, "Wow. We performed monologues from *Dead Man Walking* for Sister Helen Prejean. We performed monologues from *Dead Man Walking* for thousands of attendees at the Catholic Religious Education Congress at Anaheim Convention Center. Wow."

When I arrived at our central fountain meeting spot, Greg Callahan (DMWPlay.org) and Dorinda Upham (MDHS religion teacher) greeted me with exuberant hugs. Soon our students arrived in costume just as Sister Helen Prejean walked over and gave us some big hugs. She said to me, "Thank you Patrick for telling my story at your school."

She insisted on pictures with all of us right then and there, because according to her, “After this, today is gonna get stir crazy.” We laughed a lot while with Sister Helen, our four hours with her were full of fun and intense experiences.

Most memorable was the demonstration. Ensemble members Christina Lugo and Emma Faulkner came to snap photos the four actors and myself as we stood on the hill outside of the convention center. Just as fifteen thousand people exited the building chanting and singing and parading, our nerves kicked in. A priest came to us and said the Anaheim Police have just turned off the microphones, but the demonstration was still on. Thousands of people sang “This Little Light of Mine” while walking behind Sister Helen Prejean. She brought the organizers, politicians, religious dignitaries and speakers up to where we were. The head of SAFE California introduced speakers from various organizations that cheered the November ballot will include the Death Penalty and encouraged the crowd to support it. An opera singer sang *Ave Maria* while we stood with Sister Helen. Our students stepped forward, in costume, outdoors with out a microphone. I am so glad we perform outdoor Shakespeare annually.

Bryana Corza spoke an abridged version of the opening monologue. I was behind Sister Helen Prejean watching my student perform as Sister Helen. A very surreal thing happened, Sister Helen used an iPhone to take a picture of Bryana Corza playing her.

Then my lawyers stepped into the center of the gathering, they performed the court room argument monologues exceptionally passionate and were obviously heard by the crowd around us. We finished with Joanna Cornejo expressing the closing monologue with the Gandhi quote. Sister Helen stepped forward and hugged our students as the crowd cheered.

After the demonstration dispersed, Sister Helen talked with me about my production. She said:

“We wanted your kids to perform because what you did with the *Dead Man Walking Project* is remarkable. The amount of cross-curricular tie in is what we want from all the other schools. And we are telling them they can do what you did with the two Sisters. It makes sense, divide them up, let more girls have a chance to tell my story. Patrick, this is a Petri dish, it’s all an experiment . . . None of us know why we are here, but we know what we can do. We learn why we are here. If we make the world better, than we must make it better. You know the power art can have on a community, I need you to keep it up.”

As we walked over to my students, Sister Helen said, “I hope y’all aren’t leaving me now. Be with me before my talk. Walk with me.” And so we did just that.

Being with Sister Helen is peace. It is a calm experience that is full of love. She knows how to listen, laugh and inspire. As we walked down the outdoor veranda of the Convention Center, she has both of our Prejeans on each side kidding with her. We laughed hard when Sister Helen shouted, “Now hold on, I’m the real Prejean!” She asked where our Poncelet was and smiled when we told her he was touring Stanford University today. Joanna asked Sr. Prejean if she could talk to Casey Brecher on the phone. Sister Helen leaped at the chance and was hysterically funny while talking with our Matt Poncelet. The time in the script when Prejean seemed to say something totally out of context are so true. She is someone who acts on instinct.

As we snuck into the huge ballrooms where the speech was to be, she asked us to take the side front row and make a circle. As she ate her lunch we all hung out. She told the kids, “You know what Oscar Wilde said, ‘Be Yourself, Everybody else is already taken.’”

We sat in the front row while Sister Helen delivered her presentation to an audience of fifteen hundred adults. She spoke about the upcoming November Ballot and how when she first visited Patrick Sonnier in prison. It mostly followed her autobiographies and the play, but what got me was hearing it from her in person. It wasn't Tim Robbins interpretation. It wasn't my version of her. Attending a lecture given by Sister Helen Prejean is something special. Her accent her wit were ripe, the new details deepened my understanding. She said she will still be telling and selling her story until all souls are safe. She needs people to save people. She wants people to stop killing people. She wants peace.

I took our students next door to an empty diner. We enjoyed food and milkshakes while everyone recounted the exciting experience. Laughter and smiles filled the diner. It was Megan Deussenberry's birthday, so performing the Hilton Barber monologues in front of Sister Helen for a large crowd was pretty cool. Due to the costumes earlier in the day, my two Prejeans had been asked several times by priests and nuns, "What order are you in?" They laughed that people thought they were actual nuns. I asked them, "Do you ever think about being a Nun?" Joanna replied, "Never before this year, but Sister Helen has made me see what good they do. I'm going to do something that helps society. I'm going to be like a Nun." The others laughed, but I knew what she meant.

11 April 2012

I am no longer going to need to worry about learning to work with/for Assistant Principle Anne Welsh-Treglia. She is no longer at Mater Dei High School.

20 April 2012

Tonight is opening night for my expensive, over-the-top Senior Musical. *The Wedding Singer* features the senior members of the *Dead Man Walking* cast in their final performances at our school. This morning we had our Senior Rally, where they performed a preview of *Wedding Singer* and some awesome Improv Comedy for a crowd of 2,200. I got to announce the students that are continuing their art form in university. They entered from the inflatable Lion's mouth, which usually is the entrance for our State Champion Basketball players to enter. The athletes in the crowd cheered on my artists as they walked their walk.

This Class of 2012 has been pivotal for of the progression our theatre arts program. Some of them studied Shakespeare under me as freshmen in English 1 and then performed *Antony & Cleopatra* that year. As Sophomores, together we experienced our first plays in the Little Theatre (former locker room), *The Diary of Anne Frank* and *Bus Stop*. I directed four plays that year, and these kids helped me raise the bar for MDHS Theatre Arts Program and the visibility of the Performing Arts Department. At the end of the Sophomore year, I received a promotion to run the Performing Arts Department. I studied at CWU during these students' High School careers. Every fall I returned with new, more effective ways to teach my students, our classes improved and so did they. Last year, they produced Mrs. Seeley's final plays, deeper developed *Project: Discourse*, *Chuckles for Charity*, *ShortsFests* and *Senior Musical* in how they operate and run. This year, we have a program closer to my vision for our program. My changes to my Theatre program and my Performing Arts Department have been possible because of these amazing kids. I love them and know they are ready for the next chapters in their lives. They have learned to work as a team, to use their imaginations, to be compassionate and to inspire others. They have done good and had deep fun.

12 May 2012

7th Annual Shakespeare in the Grotto – *Much Ado About Nothing* opens three weeks from today. We had a five-hour, full cast rehearsal and it was great. The kids are stepping up and committing to their characters. They've embraced our concept and are trying really hard to make the show awesome. Many of the cast members from *Dead Man Walking* are in this production. Casey Brecher, who played Matt Poncelet, is yet another villain. This time he portrays Don John in *Much Ado*. He is having fun showing off his comedic side and has based his character on Charlie Sheen.

We are utilizing similar rehearsal techniques from *DMW*. Today was the first time we have attempted to run four acts with the full cast. We began by assemble each stage picture in show order under 10 minutes flat. The kids had fun remembering our picturization of the play. When they posed with their partners, the gestures and stances exaggerated more than before because they were having fun telling the story through pictures. This allowed them to bring more physicality and bolder gestures during the run. Each speaking role had a "shadow" partner. Just like on *DMW*, the cast was able to make eye contact, use gestures and keep their momentum due to Shadowing during the run. When a freshmen in the cast asked why we were Shadowing instead of "calling Line", Casey Brecher replied, "'Cause this is how I learned my Act 1 *Dead Man Walking* in two weeks flat."

17 May 2012

This afternoon I met with many administrators about the timeline for facelift of the Monarch Pavilion. Although they only have \$17,000 now for the project, we will be able to have some dramatic impact. We can no longer afford the industrial carpet on the walls, but we will be remove all basket ball hoops and banners, paint the walls/ceiling dark, build up dry wall to create

a tech booth and concessions stand, and reroute electricity to better serve theatrical events. I also have an \$8,000 profit from this years box office. We made money putting on good theatre. I will spend up to \$5,000 of our profit on lighting and sound equipment for the Monarch Pavilion.

Through talks in September and October with various administrators, the plan to renovate the Monarch Pavilion from an old gym into a multipurpose performing arts room began.

Although I couldn't remove hoops, nor take down banners for the event, we did modify the venue somewhat by removing the red drapes and building the triangle platform and audience platforms. I finally had permission to take down the forgotten sports memorabilia off the hallway walls. It had been neglected for the past five years that the building has been a multipurpose performing arts room. Just a week before the *Project: Discourse* week began, our facilities crew transported the items to the new gym and then patched and painted walls. Last summer we dramatically changed the old locker rooms into a pass through for backstage crosses and made old shower rooms into costume & prop storage area. Now that the hallway was rejuvenated, the potential for dramatic change became more obvious. During the Forum days, I took chance of the opportunity to chat with impressed administrators in my office. They were won over by the educational potential of our third annual *Project: Discourse* school-wide event. I asked them, "How much longer do I need to keep the basketball hoops and banners up?" and "Why can't we just paint the whole room black?" It planted a seed and got a conversation started.

The venue as been used as a Performing Arts Center for the past five years and will most likely be one for another seven years. This year was critical. In March 2011, I was able to get all Athletic Deptment storage items removed from rooms behind the gym stage. In November 2011, I was able to remove the forgotten sports memorabilia from the North Hallway and begin the Performing Arts Hallway decorating. We were able to get over 2,000 students and teachers to be

in the Monarch Pavilion *twice* in one week for *Project: Discourse* Forums and Panel Discussion. The three evening performances of *Dead Man Walking* were important because supporters of the arts came and saw what potential my program has. In December 2011, Principal Frances Clare and I spoke about fixing up the Monarch Pavilion to be suit the needs of our Performing Arts Department. This spring has been full of discussions and planning meetings, soon we will have improved the venue for our kids. The impact of the *Dead Man Walking* experience and the motivation and feedback of the Central Washington State Summer Theatre Institute has been critical in creating a better future for Mater Dei students.

**CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
THEATRE ARTS GRADUATE PROGRAM**

THESIS PROJECT/ PRODUCTION PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

STUDENT- Patrick Williams

UNDER CONSIDERATION IS DIRECTION OF: "Dead Man Walking" by Tim Robbins

EVALUATOR'S NAME: Elise Forier Edie

TITLE: Associate Professor

PLACE OF PERFORMANCE: Mater Dei High School, Santa Ana, CA

DATE OF VIEWING: November 18, 2011

DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE VENUE:

Mater Dei High School is "one of the largest private schools west of Chicago" with 2,100 students. Located in California's affluent Orange County, and carrying a fairly hefty tuition price tag, I was shocked to see their theatre is . . . a gymnasium. It's not even a converted gymnasium. It's a functional gymnasium, painted glowing white and deep red, ringed with gigantic championship pennants and more than half a dozen basketball hoops. Patrick had done his best to make the space work as a theatre: gigantic speakers blossomed from a central point in the ceiling, lighting instruments were hung from strategic places. Temporary platforms created a kind of thrust stage at one end of the space (framed by the ubiquitous basketball hoops). The audience sat on folding chairs surrounding the platforms (each folding chair had a plastic Mater Dei cushion thoughtfully placed on it, just like in a basketball game). The tech ops sat behind folding tables near the bleachers. In six years of going out and viewing thesis projects, I have never encountered a more inappropriate space for a high school theatre performance. Ever. (Patrick noted that he doesn't usually produce in the gym. Usually, he said, he produces *in the locker room*, but chose the gymnasium to accommodate a larger audience. Although plans have existed for more than a decade at Mater Dei to build a performing arts center, they have been repeatedly supplanted by the needs of the athletics programs. So Patrick produces in the locker room for small productions and in the gym for large ones. And so it goes).

DESCRIPTION OF CONCEPT:

The "Dead Man Walking" production contract comes with rather extensive stipulations, which include the involvement of other school departments besides theatre arts, as well as school wide forums for discourse and discussion. Much of Patrick's concept involved these opportunities for school collaboration. As to the production, he planned to adopt many Brechtian techniques, such as projections and captions. He planned an environmental approach, perhaps making the space look "prison like." He wanted to use a black/white/gray palette to reflect the "black and white" viewpoint of some of the characters.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTUAL PRODUCTION DIRECTION AND/OR REALIZED DESIGN OF SETS, PROPS, COSTUMES, LIGHTING, SOUND:

Patrick kept the set very simple—a mostly bare, elevated stage (gray) with a few tables, benches and chairs (also gray). A large screen dominated the back wall, on which appropriate pictures, captions and statistics were periodically projected. The stage had two levels. He also used the aisle between the audience sections to stage some small scenes.

Costumes were variations of black, white or gray for the main characters, reflecting their viewpoint on the death penalty (the Warden in black and white, for example, the death row prisoner's mother in white, the nun, Sister Prejean, in gray). Extras and townspeople characters wore colorful costumes, indicating their existence "outside" the confines of the prison and its "black and white" outlook. Some of the costume choices made me curious: the Warden's shiny black trousers, the prevalence of fake "porn 'stashes" on the male actors, the Nurse's sexy white dress (for an execution at a male prison?) but overall, I found the costumes to be appropriate and in keeping with the world of the play.

Patrick used both live (piano, voice and guitar) and recorded music for this production. All of the recorded music was original. The piano and guitar music included hymns, folksongs and the pop song “How to Save a Life.”

Because the production was staged in a gymnasium, which is not built for good acoustics, all of the actors had to wear microphones. The sound operation seemed under-rehearsed, as microphones became live at odd moments, and even with the amplification, portions of the dialogue were still inaudible.

The lights were distracting at times. Moving lights swooped on and off of the actors and sometimes the cues appeared to be a beat or two behind or ahead of the action. I suspect there was little time to rehearse the lighting cues, at least, that’s what it looked like to me.

HOW DID THE PRODUCTION DIRECTION OR DESIGN IMPLEMENT THE IDEAS EXPRESSED IN THE CONCEPT STATEMENT?

Patrick did a nice job incorporating his concept into the design and production. Students dressed as prison guards acted as ushers (and as prison guards in the show), handing out programs and seating patrons. The audience sat in seats surrounded by fences, hemming them in. The set was kept simple and stark, the lighting equally stark and cold. The insertion of music, projections and lighting effects kept Brecht’s “alienation effect” in full operation. Patrick had also been very busy incorporating much of the rest of the school in the production as per his concept. The theatre was ringed with original student writings about death, trifold displays about the death penalty and there was even a student presentation about the death penalty during intermission.

APPROPRIATENESS OF CHOICE OF SCRIPT FOR ABILITIES OF PERFORMERS, AUDIENCE, VENUE, AND/OR ACADEMIC SETTING?

This play is currently only available to university and secondary theatres, with the stipulation that multiple academic departments involve themselves in the production and that there be a campus wide “discourse” about the issue of the death penalty. Thus, in some ways, this play is a superb choice for a high school, since it demands that students engage, discuss and think critically.

As a vehicle for student involvement, discourse about a pressing issues and learning about crime, punishment and compassion, this production is very appropriate. As a vehicle for learning about alienation effect and experiencing Brechtian style production techniques, this is also a great choice for a high school. But I have to add, the subject matter and characters remain far outside the age range and experience of 13-19 year old actors, most of whom were playing people in their forties.

ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING IF APPLICABLE: CLEAR DELINEATION OF UNITS OF ACTION, MOTIVATED BLOCKING, VISUALLY INTERESTING COMPOSITION, VISUAL EXPRESSION OF METAPHOR, USE OF PICTURIZATION IN STORYTELLING, CLEAR AND BELIEVABLE CHARACTERIZATION, ADEQUATE USE OF BODY AND VOICE, UNITY OF PRODUCTION ELEMENTS, CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING.

Patrick’s use of composition and picturization was extremely skillful and downright lovely in a lot of this production. I was particularly delighted and affected by the split scene between Sister Prejean and Poncelot’s mother, juxtaposed with Poncelot in his prison, alone, and the similar effect created by having the ghosts of the murder victims threading themselves through the scenes while Sister Prejean and their families discussed their deaths. Patrick also used his phalanx of prison guards to good effect, as they created barriers and backgrounds, or else watched ominously while the action unfolded. The prisoner Poncelot in particular was rarely allowed to move on his own—instead, he was always roughly man-handled by the guards, hauled off and on stage like so much baggage. Throughout the piece, Patrick’s blocking was also superlative, with strong use of diagonals, triangles and levels, seamless scene changes and well choreographed, thoughtful transitions. The play is very long (three hours with the curtain speech, intermission and student presentation) but the play did not drag at all, indicating a strong awareness and skillful use of pacing and tempo as well.

Patrick had worried about having one actor playing Sister Prejean, since she has most of the lines and action in the play. He solved this problem by casting a “past” Prejean, who participated in the story, and a “present” Prejean, who narrated

the story. This effect worked quite well, except at the very end, when they inexplicably switched roles, the “past” becoming the “present” and vice versa. I didn’t really understand why this happened or how it helped the play.

Patrick did a lovely job incorporating student work into this production. Students designed and created the projections, wrote and performed much of the music, designed and printed the programs and posters and presented original research in the theatre and during intermission. He successfully organized a real community event, and it was obvious the students involved in the production were whole heartedly committed to creating something special and rewarding for the audience and were proud and happy to be a part of something so much larger than themselves.

As with most high school productions, many of the actors were well out of their depth with the characters they had to play—particularly the Prejeans—but I enjoyed quite a few of the performances. Patrick wisely coached his students to be natural, connected and understated, letting the text and the situation speak to the audience, instead of encouraging a lot of mugging and indicating to tell the story. The young man playing Poncelot was particularly good, as was the young man playing Mr. Delacroix. The only time I really felt like the actors could have been coached better was during the climactic death scene, when we were witnessing the Poncelot’s execution and the simultaneous flashback to the murder he committed. Although the actor playing Poncelot was utterly believable in death, I really did not believe for one moment that the murder victims were pleading for their life at gunpoint. Much of the horror and dehumanization of that moment was lost as a result. This was too bad, since the preceding scenes before Poncelot’s execution had been very well done, in every way.

WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THIS PARTICULAR PERFORMANCE VENUE, WAS THIS PRODUCTION SATISFACTORY OR UNSATISFACTORY?

This production was very satisfactory.

So many things were thoroughly professional, remarkably smooth and well executed, effective and satisfying. It is clear to me that Patrick is a director of remarkable sensitivity and a really fine drama teacher. “Dead Man Walking” was a superlative production in every way.

Self-Evaluation

This production marks a turning point for our Theatre Program and positive step forward for our Performing Arts Department. *The Blackboard* was the visual inspiration for my concept, it represents education and metaphorically uses layers of chalk to represent layers of discussion and much learning happening. The areas written in white chalk on the black board have been erased, cut up and reconfigured so many times that the blackboard is now a grey area. The concept of the death penalty being a grey area motivated so many aspects of the production and the cross curricular event *Project: Discourse*. Discussions triggered from this production happened in classrooms, on iPad2, on blogs, on Skype, at guest speaker panels, at educational forums, at intermission and in reflection papers afterwards. Three years ago, I began the annual *Project: Discourse* event to engage the school wide community in discourse of social issues. This year's event had many of the same aspects, the forum had a preview and religion classes brought their students in for a group discussion with a speakers panel, we went big. The whole school experienced a cross-curricular discourse and learning event. Faculty and Administration are on board with making this an annual tradition because they know its worth. They now make suggestions for topics of next year's play. I will now use *Project: Discourse* to respond to the topics our school needs to discuss. This Catholic story of a compassionate Sister of St. Josef woke up our community to important social issues and gained their support of our theatrical efforts. The kids learned. I learned. We shared. They shared. A community embraced a story told by these kids. Our school grew closer together through shared experience.

We entered this play into two competitions. I believe the California Educational Theatre Association, CETA, represents the best of High School theatre in California. The schools involved in it have teachers that attend annual training conferences for professional development

At one of these conferences I was introduced to the play version of this story. The CETA teachers are great Southern California theatre artists that inspire their students to produce quality and magnificent work. Their festival for high school students includes many categories including best play per county of which Orange County has the most entrees and most are very good. We entered our show into CETA's High School Festival. We ended up winning several acting certificates and awards; we benefited from the experience. The other organization we became involved in is CAPPIES, which are student writers from other High Schools who review our production. They have some press conferences with the Director, Cast and Stage Management, attend the show and compose reviews. Some reviews end up being published by the Orange County Register, we had two reviews in the local paper. I love showing off our efforts to these appreciative and theatre minded guests. For *Dead Man Walking* received nominations for Best Supporting Actress, Best Featured Actress and also best Publicity, and three Commendation Acting Awards.

What worked in our production was the "Let's Learn and Discuss" attitude. With the help of a core team of teachers, we caused a ripple effect. Many faculty members across campus began teaching lessons inspired and related to our play. The first was a science teacher who used the original crime as the basis for his Forensics Unit. One of the last tie-ins was an AP Spanish IV teacher who had her students speak in fluent Spanish while Skyping with lawyers in South America about the death penalty. This positive attitude toward our play gained us a supportive community. The students in the play enjoyed performing the *Project: Discourse* Forums. We were all surprised that we could get 400 random students to silently type on their iPad2s about the theme of performance they just saw. The magic happened when a student would read a reflection into the microphone and all the students listened. Our theatre kids caught onto the

positivism before last summer when they received copies of the auto-biography *Dead Man Walking* by Sister Helen Prejean. Many hopeful actors checked out the script versions a month before auditions. By the time auditions hit, students were prepared and dedicated to bringing something special to MDHS.

Our concept became the root of the choices made on the production. It brought opposing viewpoints into a discussion. It allowed for personalities to stand out. The dull palate gave opportunity to focus on simple details like a pantomime action to open a door, or for a scene to switch from a kitchen in a house to be a prison hallway and then restore the kitchen look within a matter of lines of dialogue. We were able to play make believe by avoiding using one-time-only types of things. A simple gray bench could be a prison cell, then the limbo zone for the after-life to cross over, then a wall in the death house and finish as the execution table and coffin. The concept provoked us to create movement patterns to define locations, change the mood or to demonstrate an opinion. If a blackboard did have layers of previous conversations marked on it, the smear of combing those ideas would become one thing. It is a common experience. A “you-had-to-be-there” kind of magic happened because of what happened on our blank slate. The characters in the play became archetypes because of the idea of gray area. They needed to be quickly identifiable and representative of a section of society. The poor good people of any community were represented in stereotypical costume and hairstyles. They stood out as if drawn on a blackboard to prove a point. The nurse, although comical in costume, was instantly representative of nurses even though she was the only nurse in the play. Our collective groups like the pro-death penalty protestors represent restaurant workers, rural folk and politicians because of the cut out approach to define the exterior of their character. The characters at the center of the issue were gray. Those close to them were neutral in color and texture of fabric.

Those opposite them were boldly defined through black and white choices. The lighting choices defined the mood of a location or conversation, although last minute vision due to the incorrect light plot we received caused some improved approaches, it worked. The use of the intelligent lamps' harsh coldness wash gave the various parts of the prison a sterile feel. The old lighting instruments, like Lekos and par-cans, made the scenes at homes feel more comfortable. The idea of black versus white affected the seating arrangement for the audience, they saw the play from two different perspectives. Only the tech crew at the tech booth area, musicians & cast, on stage cast got to be in the middle of the issue. They know the gray area and have learned to listen to others while sharing opinions. The middle ground is the connection of the conversation where things need to be explored from various perspectives. The gray area concept inspired the production to embrace the script's theatrical need for creativity.

When students wanted to be cast on this journey of deep social issue discussion, I cast them. I cast each one of them. I found a way to. Originally I thought I'd only cast about 35 of them, like size of a class. However, when 56 auditioned, I realized the play needs a chorus. These kids needed this play, so I made some choices. I'm glad I cast them. This event is about bringing a community together. We were able to add reporters, guards, friends to many scenes. It brought forth an essence of a general population being immersed in the issues. The large ensemble also reminds that every type of person has experienced things as important as death of a loved one. Asking so many students to define characters that were not in the script was something that became a blessing. The students began with economic class, job and lifestyle choices. Before the end of our first month together, I asked the students to chose what side of the death penalty issue their character stands on. They now had to ask themselves, "How does my character think?" It was a great lesson in acting for them. It also helped solve one of the trickiest

parts of the script. The execution at the end of Act 1, although Tim Robbins has dropped hints and exposition about an impending execution that is not Poncelet, it comes abruptly and does not lend directions on how to define them. Robbins has nuns singing Kumbaya as Prejean explains that she worried about how Poncelet felt in prison while someone was been executed. I am so glad we played in rehearsal with the Support Group and blending it into an all out demonstration outside the prison walls. Because I asked the cast to pick their characters viewpoint on capitol punishment, I now had a stage full of various contrasting images that build tension while Poncelet cries in his cell alone. We see the softer side of the killer in this ending to Act 1. In our production we tried to have the audience feel the chaos, then see Poncelet's reaction to it, the chaos created by the community's discourse. This script and our approach to rehearsals allowed my students to deepen their characters by asking "What do I think?" I allowed my students to decide how their character felt and then blocked each cast member based on their answer.

The acting in this play was better than in our previous productions. There is some top notch talent amongst my kids this generation. I tried to showcase their strengths all while also improving their skills. The script and my direction demanded the cast to make choices and be bold at times. At other times they needed to be quiet and listen to others. The text is awkwardly after-school special at times, my students found a way to handle awkward lines and scenes like lesson scenarios played out at a religious gathering. I believe we made these work because my actors remained subtle and allowed the chunky dialogue and projected visuals to make the point. There are other moments in our production in which we let the tempo slow down enough for the audience to let down its guard. This cast was able to feel the scenes and transitions for their emotional impact. They used their long distance entrances and exits to keep telling a story through movement.

Some cast members joined the show for the subject matter or admiration for Sister Helen Prejean, more than the chance to act. I tricked these kids into trying acting for the first time. Although their lack of experience did show onstage at times (Blue Reporter, Hope Percy, etc), these cast members did improve in areas of self-confidence and public speaking. I ended up finding fixes to cover up problems; I hope most audience were distracted enough through the multi-layering of semiotics to distract from some weaknesses. When we finally tried the death montage flashback of the killing, during Tech the actors portraying the shadows were lacking emotion because they were thrown by the mirror projection system. So I added the Act 1 murder slides over top of the silhouette of the kids just before their death. I hoped the overlapping crime pictures would layer a sub-conscience memory of the crime with the dialogue and slow moving shadows. I know it was me problem-solving last minute by squirting cologne to cover up bad odor. The Hope actress did not fulfill her potential as an actress. My reporter in blue costume actually was amazing (for her), she has continued acting and is in the ensemble of *Much Ado*.

Some of the kids I've cast in non-speaking roles before really demonstrated their ability to carry leading roles. My Prejeans and Poncelet had their first large roles and I am so happy they worked so hard to be good. They made me proud and grateful. I have directed some of the leading and supporting actors before in Shakespeare roles and in American classics, so they can handle text. Others, I have taught on our Improvisational Comedy Club, so they are able to handle partner work and can be in the moment. My usual big role getters did not disappoint and they made sure to step up as role models. I loved when they would help a newer actor to understand a transition and when they would include. The cast was good to each other, they embraced the script and the Discourse event, thus they had impact. They trusted me with our organic approach to solving staging problems that script had a tendency to give. They supported

each other and I believe that is what helped some newer actors to try harder. If I keep producing plays with large ensembles, I need to find a new approach to rehearsal scheduling to allow time to better develop the skills of the some of the less experienced cast member. This play was challenging for this age of cast to portray. I ended up producing Children's Theatre with these students after this production, so these students got a chance to let loose and be young on that. However, I believe the challenge of attempting to be an older character or a character who has experienced something intense, it a good way to stretch a young performer. They try new things and learn new ways.

We took a risk with the bifurcation of the Prejean role. It worked in so many ways. My goal to give another girl a chance at portraying the remarkable Sister Helen Prejean was achieved and celebrated when both girls got to spend time with the real Prejean. It allowed us to have scenes continue with movement as the narrator gave a short speech. Times like this kept the flow of the show constant. Instead of suspending action so that the lead could shift focus and talk in past tense, we were able to have the present nun go about her business and of entering a room of reading a letter while the future nun told us that experience.

I always thought of the dialogue nun as being Sister Helen Prejean before her experience with Matt that turned her into a public speaker against the Death Penalty. I thought of the narrator nun being Prejean after the process of losing Matt Poncelet, the speaking engagement Prejean that she continues to be today. However, I wanted for them to look identical to help the young non-theatre going audience to quickly understand these actresses were playing the same role. Using the idea of being changed after Matt's death and now going on speaking tours like her inspiration Sister Marie Augusta Neal.

I wanted there to be a moment with the box of Matt's boots in the final scene in which

the two Prejeans hold the boots, then the nun who experienced the journey before us now talks to audience like the public speaker she is now. The other nun now starts a new journey of experience by becoming the dialogue nun in the conclusion. Her dialogue with Earl Delacroix is about what is next. At some dress rehearsals, entrances with the box were late or happened without the box or one nun was at soccer practice or so many other things, that the moment didn't really get to work until the two final performances. It was an added magic detail of theatricality that sparked the final prayer moment and made my Catholic audience come to peace with the cross illuminated above, our actors dropping their characters and becoming kids bowing on a stage. Sister Helen's story is inspirational, so to share it with two girls became special. My dialogue with the Dead Man Walking School Project organization was very supportive of this risk. I asked for permission before the auditions; they allowed it instantly. National Coordinator Greg Callaghan remarked after attending our production closing night, "There's a video of a school in Texas that tried two nuns, one was old with grey hair and one was young. It didn't work. Prejean's message is timeless. Can I suggest the way you did it to other schools that produce this play?"

Matt Poncelet is a fantastic role for a young actor. It should probably be handled by a college trained and more experienced actor, but I am really happy with Casey Brecher's ability to make us feel. His tough guy exterior and hurt boy interior made the constant question of should he die or not become legitimate. His quiet times on stage made his monologues come alive. He could just turn to the fourth wall and look at the audience. The lower stage became his house while the upper level became the other character's residences. Casey took advantage of this and used his physicality well to demonstrate his rituals of sitting, sleeping, working out, eating, discussing, fighting, pleading, confessing and praying, but most of all, I am so proud of this actor

for committing to the final seconds of Matt Poncelet's life. Casey Brecher was able to control and isolate parts of his body to make us believe the chemicals were seizing his organs. His commitment and dedication to this play and to himself is remarkable. He has since received a certificate for Acting in a Lead Role from CETA, and a commendation medal from CAPPIES and has been voted our ASB Vice-President for next school year. It was a pleasure to trust such a demanding lead role to this great kid. He is a leader.

Earl Delacroix was played by a campus celebrity, Matt Dallal. He and I have been through a lot. He has been expelled three times, is president of my Improv Club and has performed in many supporting roles and couple of leads since finding his love of theatre three years ago. He belongs in a career in theatre. I believe Earl Delacroix is one of the best roles written for a play, it is a great role. Delacroix gets to confront a nun in his first scene, then reveal himself through monologues in two scenes and somehow by the end of the show ends up sharing the final moments with the protagonist Prejean. I needed my strongest actor in this role to help propel the show. Matt Dallal is the best actor I have directed at Mater Dei; he did a great job keeping Delacroix rooted and honest. His timing with our organic counseling group monologue cacophony was perfect. It changed between nights and forum previews, but it was always right for the moment. His ability to empathize for an older character who has lost his wife and son is impressive. Dallal went on after this play to win Best Actor at the Chapman University Shakespeare Festival, chosen as Best Senior Monologues by CETA, a finalist at Fullerton College Improv and now the Mater Dei Outstanding Theatre Artist 2012. And, yes, somehow he did get to walk at graduation.

There were two more actors that I thought deserved more recognition in the performance evaluation. The performance given by Jackie Janowicz as Lucille Poncelet was great. She

handled being the mother of the murderer with such compassion. Jackie felt for Lucille and in turn so did I. Sometimes Jackie would give a look and the beginnings of a sob that were just as revealing as her monologues. Her commitment to the accent and honest telling of her character impacted the adults in the audience. We could identify with her worries of reputation and how to raise her other boys. The other actor is Megan Duesenberry as Hilton Barber. She took a role that was marvelously played in the movie by a senior citizen man, and transformed it into a powerful 1980s working woman. Her diction was clear and ability to speak the legal arguments with ease. She tried very hard to nail down the words and correct pronunciations because she new her character needed a quick retort ability whether sitting down talking to Poncelet or standing commanding a court room. Both Jackie and Megan went on to have roles in more plays and both received acting certificates from CETA. Megan is up for the Best Featured Actress in Play CAPPIES Award and is performing as Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Her acting is better now because of by in *Dead Man Walking*. Both ladies are planning on continuing to study theatre at Universities after High School.

Pictures talk to me. I have a feeling in my bones so I think about it. Then I ask cast members to try something. Sometimes I describe it as metaphor, sometimes I say “what if ...”. My actors assemble looks and I tweak them. Then we improvise blocking options while reading the text and eventually hit some of the predetermined pictures. Often times the pictures are just simple, like one actor standing while another is sitting. However, it works for me. The students walk where it makes sense for them and settle into the pictures with ease because they use the text to tell their story. The double audience viewpoints meant I needed to create a show for one audience and another show for the audience. Once my actors and I created our blocking patterns, I needed to make sure the impact of the blocking worked from either side. Somehow though, I

feel House Left side became stronger at telling Poncelet's story and the House Right side became stronger for telling Prejean's story.

The triangle decking created diagonals, the simple furniture tilted just so could change the picture and allow us to make an audience believe we were now outside in the rain or in a cell. Because our entrances to the lower level took a long time and the lower level was always lit somewhat due to the bounce off the white gym walls, it was easy to keep characters onstage in poses or slowly moving. Then above, the actors with dialogue had an added layer to their scene. Instead of just the Percy family having coffee with Prejean, we now could have their dead daughter watching from a bench below, like a lonely Greek chorus member observing between the spectators and thespian. She was silent and slow, not distracting but definitely adding to the emotional tug of the scene. I used this often. Having Poncelet lay and sit on his cell bench just below the upper stage floor while his mother stood above created a heart breaking effect because she was talking about her son. The conversation with Prejean in that scene is about Poncelet being put to death, Poncelet laid on his bench like a man in coffin just below the surface the living folk stand on. The levels also helped create an idea of layers of the complicated issue of capitol punishment. I wanted the audience to change their minds through out, I wanted them to hate and to love the killer. Having the guards assemble the benches to represent the execution table below just before Poncelet and Chaplain Farley have communion above added a visual during the sacred ritual. The staging was revealed at all times in our production because we couldn't pull tricks on the audience. In a proscenium theatre with drops that sequence could have been Poncelet receiving communion in front of drape, then it opens to reveal an execution chamber. We created illusions in front of the audience. They saw a table and could believe it belonged to the Nuns at Hope House, then watched our scene shift Guards carry it to another part

of the stage and believe it belonged in the prison for visitation purposes. Using the Brecht approaches to remind an audience they are in a theatre made the technical choices easy. Abrupt lighting cues and live music and film projections reminded the audience this is theatrical storytelling. Our two sided blocking composition and use of picturization were just as theatrical. I am being able to trust my instincts and feelings while directing more. The plays I have directed since *Dead Man Walking* have been easier because I trust myself more as a director. I am very happy with the looks I created in *Dead Man Walking*. I can be creative and not worry now because my products are good and the processes I love.

I believe details are the tiny truths that tell a tale. I loved having my students help define moments past their description on the page. Choosing to spend a great deal of the budget on raised platforms, sound system and operator and a stage manager were wise because they helped bring our creativity to fruition. The script called for radio announcers to be heard while the stage is dark for set changes. We applied creative techniques like projections of images in black and white and/or had ensemble members play the voices live in an ensemble scene. The script doesn't consider transitions, rather leaves it to the director to solve, which I loved doing. I assume Tim Robbins didn't want to define scenes by numbers nor suggest ways to make this many locations happen because he wants the story to be told by a director in the way it needs to be told to their audience.

The sequence calling for a brief history lesson about the Act 1 execution was changed to be images of the Poncelet killings so that the audience could follow the main story better. By adding our ensemble members onstage watching the images, they represent the audience, their zombie walk afterwards allows the audience to know it's ok to feel shocked by the information in this play. The details of the end of Act 1, inspired emotions, we had shadow work to show an

execution process while nuns sang and a piano played and a lot of stuff going on made the whole feel like we are a huge community in the heat of a problem. The long execution scene at the end of the play had many challenges provided by the script. We used stillness to set mood and even added the ghosts of the dead kids to walk by the dead killer. Our touches were inspired by the script and enhanced the theatricality. It's a joy to share these creative effective solutions with these students. They like to create and to make magical moments. They composed songs and slide shows on their iPad2 and we used some in our production. We were able to roll with obstacles and challenges because our students and helping faculty were interested in being creative and embracing the concept to solve problems.

This play has created a ripple effect at our school. The design and dramatic change of our typical stage set-up allowed the administrators to imagine a venue facelift. The renovation happens during the summer months, so next year's productions will have more appropriate venue. As for the *Project: Discourse* event; classes and the arts have something to combine on annually. The students in the arts inspired the other students to experience live theatre and to share their ideas. The annual social issues event now has people wanting to offer their ideas for future discussions. Our school is built on traditions, from religious ceremonies to athletic rituals before annual big rival games, and now we have a tradition that celebrates and encourages collaboration amongst the academic portions of our school. The first year of *Project: Discourse* occurred just after our 2009 WASC report. Recently our event was mentioned in the three-year review report as the number one item Mater Dei has developed since the last WASC. They bragged about the *Dead Man Walking* discourse. This play was more than a play for my school.



DEAD MAN WALKING

Dress Rehearsal Act 1



DEAD MAN WALKING

Dress Rehearsal Act 2

A CD-ROM disc with a central hole. The text is printed in a bold, sans-serif font.

DEAD MAN WALKING

***Act 1 Performance
Multi-cam Edit***

A CD-ROM disc with a central hole. The text is printed in a bold, sans-serif font.

DEAD MAN WALKING

***Act 2 Performance
Multi-cam Edit***



DEAD MAN WALKING

Performance Act 1



DEAD MAN WALKING

Performance Act 2

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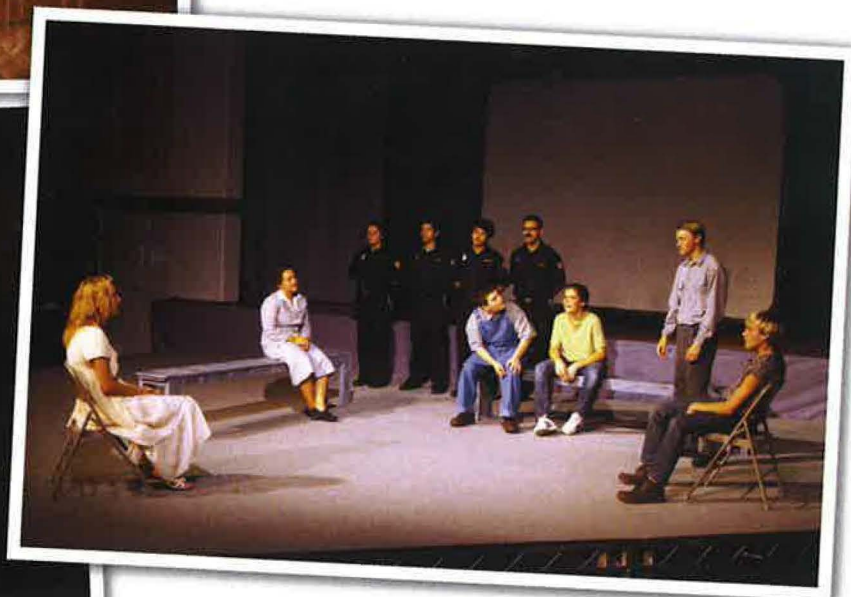
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JUSTICE
IS NOT A
BLACK & WHITE ISSUE,
RATHER IT'S A
GRAY AREA.





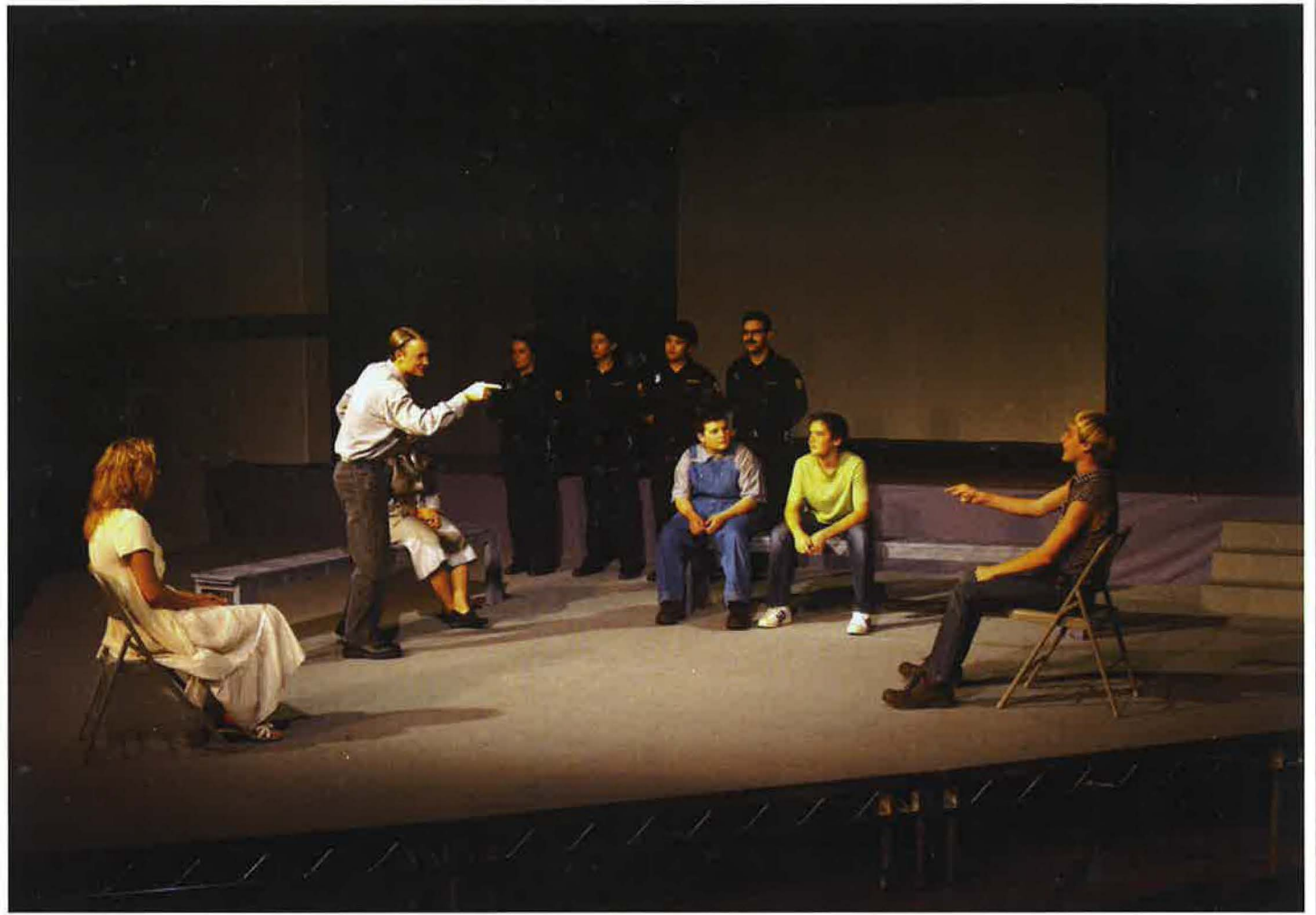








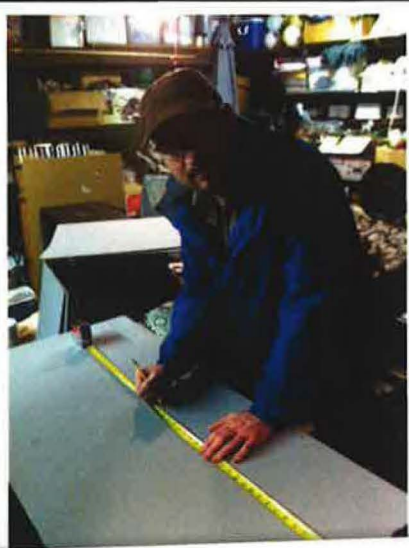
2 VIEWPOINTS





**transformation of gym stage -
it becomes a gray area**





- * PROPERTIES & SETTINGS
- * LIGHTING DESIGN
- * DESIGN METHODOLOGIES

SKILLS DEVELOPED IN THESE CLASSES CAME IN VERY HANDY WHILE GETTING IT ALL TOGETHER





...y hama, wide thy Jamie, Palmbess who reign above
Mater- Dei, Alma Mater, Honor - Glory - Love.

...fair thy name wide thy Jamie, Palmbess who reign above
To Mater Dei, Alma Mater, Honor - Glory - Love.

PROJECT: DISCOURSE

THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT



November 18, 2011

Dear Mater Dei Cast and Crew,

Congratulations on the opening of your production of Dead Man Walking! How I wish that I could be in the audience to experience your telling of this very moving and heartbreaking story. I have no doubt that, just as your minds and hearts were opened as you studied your role in the play, so too will the audience be carried into this tragic human drama and thus moved and changed by its power.

Surely your souls will broaden and deepen as you engage in the telling of this story. But also keep in mind that to present this drama to the school and the local community you are providing a crucial service. You, the cast, are bringing an issue that we, individually or collectively, rarely think about. By provoking a discussion on the death penalty, a key moral issue of our day, you are awakening the community. You are opening their minds and hearts to understand forgiveness and reconciliation in a new light. Susan Sarandon once told me that "The vocation of acting is enforced compassion." That is what each of you are doing as you bring this story to your community.

I send you my heartfelt gratitude for immersing yourselves so fully and enthusiastically into this national play project. You are setting an example to many other schools who will also be performing this play across our country in the coming months. Tim Robbins has given us the gift of his play but you are bringing it to life. My only wish is that I could see each school's production of the play. Even though that is not possible I do know that as I cross this country engaging our people in a honest discourse about the death penalty I will also be feeling the vibrant energy that you are sending out across our nation and world.

Thank you so much for your partnership in this good work.

Signature is illegible.

Please note:

This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.

3009 Grand Route St John, Apartment 6, New Orleans, LA 70119

Phone: 504-940-6583 Fax: 504-948-6558

Email: playproject@dpdiscourse.org

Web: www.deadmanwalkingplay.org

Students Perform for Sister Helen Prejean

Posted on March 30, 2012 by mdhsperformarts



On March 24, at the LA Religious Education Congress, Sister Helen Prejean spoke about her journey. Mater Dei theatre students were invited to perform some monologues from the play *Dead Man Walking*. We presented this play last fall as part of our annual cross-curriculum event *Project: Discourse*. It was an honor to perform some monologues at the Anaheim Convention Center last weekend.



Our students not only performed for a large crowd, but they spent a great deal of time with Sister Helen Prejean. While rehearsing the play last fall, these students researched the efforts of Sister Helen Prejean. At the Congress, after they performed, she asked them to accompany her to her speech. During this time she inspired them and had a memorable dialogue. We finished our day by attending her speech and forever being moved by Sister Helen's powerful message.

The play *Dead Man Walking* was written by Tim Robbins and is only available for schools and churches to produce. For more information about the play, please visit the national website dmwplay.org

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Mane Message

Some things you may not know about Mater Dei High School...

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**CATHOLIC
MOBILIZING
NETWORK**
TO END THE USE OF
THE DEATH PENALTY

PROMOTE
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

MISSION :: PROGRAMS :: CURRICULUM :: RESOURCES :: BY STATE :: EN I

Play Project Update: Mater Dei Students Bring 'Dead Man Walking' to Religious Education Congress

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By Greg Callaghan, National Coordinator, Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project

— April 16, 2012 — The Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project was thrilled to attend the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress in Anaheim, Calif., at the end of March. Students from Mater Dei High School in Santa Ana performed highlights of the play as part of the [SAFE California](#) rally to replace the death penalty in the state (pictured at right). The scenes that the students performed were very powerful, and showed the unique way that the Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project encourages young people to think about and respond to the death penalty. Students from Mater Dei and other California high schools are available to perform a short selection of scenes at your parish or community center. Please contact us for more information.

Performances of Dead Man Walking continue this spring at the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Ind., April 19-21; Christian Brothers High School in Sacramento, Calif., April 25-28; Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kansas, April 26-29; and Shawnee High School in Shawnee, Okla., May 3-5.



We are currently booking schools to participate in the Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project for the 2012-2013 school year. If you know of a high school or college in your community that may be interested in participating in the project, please contact the national coordinator, Greg Callaghan by [email](#) or by phone at [\(415\) 469-9149](#).



Jesus Was a Victim of the Death Penalty



A Prayer to Abolish the Death Penalty

by Helen Prejean, CSJ

God of Compassion,
You let your rain fall on the just and the unjust.
Expand and deepen our hearts
so that we may love as You love,
even those among us
who have caused the greatest pain by taking life.
For there is in our land a great cry for vengeance
as we fill up death rows and kill the killers
in the name of justice, in the name of peace.
Jesus, our brother,
you suffered execution at the hands of the state
but you did not let hatred overcome you.

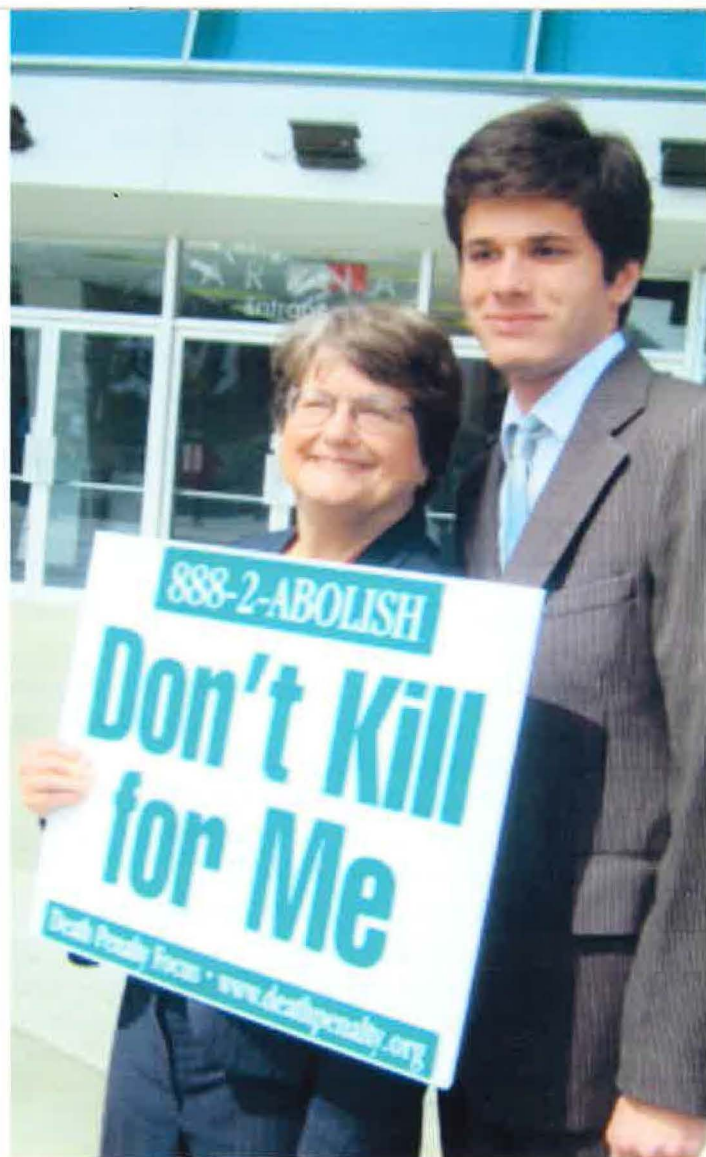
Jesus Was a Victim of the Death Penalty



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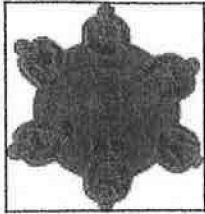
A PRAYER FOR JUSTICE

God of Compassion

You let your rain fall on the just and the unjust.
Expand and deepen our hearts
so that we may love as You love,
even those among us
who have caused the greatest pain by taking life.
For there is in our land a great cry for vengeance
as we fill up death row and kill the killers
in the name of justice, in the name of peace.
Jesus, our brother,
you suffered execution at the hands of the state
but you did not let hatred overcome you
Help us to reach out to victims of violence
so that our enduring love may help them heal.
Holy Spirit of God,
You strengthen us in the struggle for justice,
Help us to work tirelessly
for the abolition of state-sanctioned death
and to renew our society in its very heart
so that violence will be no more.

Amen.

- Sister Helen Prejean



Death Penalty Discourse Network

Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project

Dear Young Americans and Teachers,

To widen the reflection and discourse on the death penalty in our country we are extending our invitation to schools across the country to produce Tim's stage play, *Dead Man Walking*, based on Sister Helen Prejean's book. When the film hit theatres across the country in 1996, we were amazed at the way it provoked discussion on the death penalty. Like the film we have shaped the stage play to encourage discourse and discovery regarding this very important social and human rights issue.

Since the fall of 2004, 146 schools have performed the play with fantastic results. Now with your help we'd like to expand this invitation even further across our nation through your many networks: school theatres, student and academic associations, as well as professional and community networks. Word about this unique Play Project continues to spread, but we believe that it will be your energy and knowledge of the schools, publications, and associations in your communities that will multiply this invitation beyond our wildest dreams.

In entrusting the play to you our only requirements are that schools who participate:

1. Involve at least two other academic departments (law, sociology, humanities, criminal justice, etc.) to provide courses related to the death penalty and including Sister Helen's first book, *Dead Man Walking*, in the syllabus, as well as her most recent book *The Death of Innocents*.
2. We especially invite the art and music departments to sponsor creative projects on the issue (the CD of *Dead Man Walking*, reissued by Sony, may spark the imaginations of musicians and future composers).
3. Then give us feedback on your production of DMW: creative initiatives that you did on campus or with other schools or community organizations, suggestions on how to expand the discourse on campus and in the local community, and what worked or didn't work.
4. We ask that you not produce the play for commercial gain.

As we move into the fifth year of this outstanding national project, we are fueled and inspired by the creativity and talent that we've seen in schools throughout the country. We are experiencing, first hand, the power of theatre arts and academic study to stir hearts and minds to new levels of understanding and compassion not only on school campuses but in their local communities as well.

We hope that you will join us in this unprecedented theatre enterprise.

To participate in this project simply contact the Play Project Coordinator, Maureen Fenlon, at 504-940-6583 or email her at playproject@dpdiscourse.org. Check out our Web site at www.dmwplay.org and listen to the audio clips (click the Get Involved tab on the Web site) where I (Tim) talk about the Play Project and how it evolved. Also, you can talk with me, Sister Helen, on my blog at <http://sisterhelen.org>.

Sincerely,

Signature is illegible.

Signature is illegible.

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.





PROJECT: DISCOURSE

THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT

New Production Event: *Discourse*

Proposal by Mr. Patrick Williams, January 2009

The *Discourse* event will be a fourth production added to our season. Most local High School Theatre programs offer four plays a year directed by faculty and one play a year directed by students. The addition of this fourth production will bring our department closer to the offerings of other schools. It could also be a life changing experience for students. Advanced Theatre students (upperclassmen) would be the cast for this event.

The purpose of *Discourse* would be to create dialogue amongst students about social issues. *Discourse* will be a collaborative project between the Performing Arts Department and other departments on campus. Each year *Discourse* will focus on a different issue and other departments would be encouraged to participate if the issue is part of their curriculum. *Discourse* is the title of the project, a different script will be chosen each year.

Discourse would be performed on campus, in the Little Theatre, Old Gym or Grotto based on the production needs. The event and production will be directed by Mr. Williams. **The project would not focus on production values, rather on the educational and discussion aspects brought on by the chosen scripts.** Select classes will attend the production during the school day free of cost to them. Evening/Weekend ticketed performances will be available for other students, parents and community to attend.

Possible Productions to be considered: *Dead Man Walking, The Diary of Anne Frank, Runaways, The Laramie Project, 1984, Lord of the Flies, The Exonerated, Inherit the Wind*, etc.

Possible Costs: Script Royalties, Production needs, programs, publicity, etc.
Initial Estimated Budget needed: \$1,500

Example of *Discourse* –

Registration week August 2009 – Students audition for *Discourse: The Diary of Anne Frank*

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| September 2009 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Juniors in the Religion/History classes study Holocaust & write journals- English classes read passages from Anne Frank's diary & write responses- The Math department students find & analyze statistics from the Holocaust- NAHS has a contest to design the graphics for the program and publicity- Cast members rehearse the play after-school and on weekends (on campus) |
| October 2009 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">– One week before performance, cast members go to classrooms & perform a scene, followed by a conversation between peers (<i>Discourse</i>)- The program is created utilizing the Stats, Journals and Artwork created by various students in various departments. The program becomes a resource.- Mid October (10/13 & 10/14)– For two class days the play is performed twice a day for classes to see, following each performance there is a discussion between peers in the classes. A professional from the community could be involved to help facilitate and answer questions about the social issues.- (10/15,16,17th) There are three evening performances of the production in the Little Theatre with low tickets prices. Audience members read the compiled information in the program. Before performance and during Intermission is some sort of visual aide like a powerpoint addressing the topic. |

Memo

To: MD Administrative Board

From: Patrick Williams
Director, *Project: Discourse*

Anna-Lisa George
Curriculum Coordinator, *Project: Discourse*

Date: September 15, 2011

Re: *Project: Discourse 2011*
Dean Man Walking

"Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project integrates the power of theatre arts and academic study into the national discourse on the death penalty to replace ignorance, apathy, and cynicism among young people regarding the death penalty with information, introspection, and inspiration."

(DMW School Theatre Project, <http://dmwplay.org>)

What are the educational objectives of *Project: Discourse*?

The original proposal for Mater Dei's *Project: Discourse*, submitted and approved in 2009, states that the purpose is to create dialogue among students about important social issues. Discourse is a collaborative project between the Performing Arts Department and other academic departments on campus, with each department encouraged to participate if the issue can be integrated as part of the curriculum. The point is **not a focus on production values** of the play, but rather **on the educational and discussion aspects** brought on by the script. Students will attend the production during the school day free of cost to them. Evening/Weekend ticketed performances will be available for students, parents, and community to attend.

* This addresses our WASC Action Plan #1, focusing on cross-curricular work, helping students make meaningful connections between disciplines.

* This also addresses WASC Action Plan #2, in that this type of cross-curricular, project-based learning is supported by current educational research.

This year's approach:

- Curricular component in all English classes (literary/thematic connections)
- All students view 80-minute performance during English class on block days (selected scenes, monologues, & discussion component)
- Curricular component in Religious Studies classes (and possibly guest speakers)
- Curricular components in other courses/departments where the topic can be smoothly integrated as part of the curriculum. (See <http://dmwplay.org> for teaching ideas.)

Schedule:

- Saturday, Nov. 12 – 7:00pm Dance Team Recital in Monarch Pavilion
- Sunday, Nov. 13 – Load Tech into Monarch Pavilion (set/light/sound) and Tech rehearse
- Monday, Nov. 14 – Load Audience Seating Platforms into Monarch Pavilion, Focus Lights
Finish tech during the day
 - Evening Dress Rehearsal
- Tuesday, Nov. 15 – Finish tech/audience set-ups during the day
 - Evening Dress Rehearsal
- Wednesday, Nov. 16 – 80-minute Performances
 - 9:00am – all Block 4 English classes
 - 1:10pm – all Block 2 English classes
- Thursday, Nov. 17 – 80-minute Performances
 - 7:15am – all Block 0 English classes
 - 11:30am – all Block 6 English classes (eat upper lunch)
 - Afternoon/Evening Final Dress Rehearsal of full-length show
- Friday, Nov. 18 – Religion classes have guest speakers (may meet in Monarch Pavilion)
 - 7:30pm – Full-length Production for public/parent audience, CETA judges, CAPPIES students, and CWU Thesis Committee Chair
- Saturday, Nov. 19 – 7:30pm Full-length Production for public/parent audience and CETA judges
- Sunday, Nov. 20 – DAY OFF
- Monday, Nov. 21 – 80-minute Performance
 - 11:30am – all Block 5 English classes (eat upper lunch)
- Tuesday, Nov. 22 – 80-minute Performances
 - 9:00am – all Block 3 English classes
 - 1:10pm – all Block 1 English classes
 - 7:30pm Full-length Production for public/parent audience

Summary:

7 free = 80-minute Performances for students (select scenes with discussion/presentation)

3 paid admission = Full-length Performances ((Fri 11/18, Sat 11/19 & Tuesday 11/22)

Pending Approval:

1. Switch Tuesday, Nov 15 Block Schedule A to Thursday, Nov. 17

The week's schedule would be...

Mon & Tues: 50-minute

Wed: Block B (as usual)

Thurs: Block A

Fri: 50-minute

Rationale:

- In order to accommodate audience for student-performances, need time to build platforms (Move-in cannot begin until after Dance Recital.)
- Need time for extra dress-rehearsal (with two versions of the show to rehearse)
- Senior Retreat Tues & Wed would exclude many seniors from participating. This way, seniors with blocks 2 & 4 English classes on Wed could watch free performance with block 0 on Thurs.

2. Add Full-length Closing Night Performance on Tuesday, Nov. 22

Rationale:

- Over 70 students involved in show; anticipate large audience, especially after free shortened student performances
- Estimated budget: \$10, 575; additional ticket sales to break even
- Closing run with a full-length show makes sense

Mater Dei High School

From: George, Anna-Lisa

Sent: Friday, September 16, 2011 2:32 PM

To: Murphy, Patrick; Clare, Frances; Adams, Erica; Taylor, David; Hickman, Kevin; Kitsinis, Charisse; Welsh-Treglia, Anne; Zamora, Griselda

Cc: Williams, Patrick

Subject: Project Discourse Plan & Proposal

Dear Colleagues,

Attached is this year's plan for *Project: Discourse*. I am privileged to be assisting Patrick Williams as curriculum coordinator for MD's participation in the *Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project*. The first page of the proposal outlines some of the objectives of the project and our approach here at MD. At the top of the second page, you will find the schedule of events. At the bottom of the second page, you will find the two items that still require administrative approval.

The purpose of *Project: Discourse* is for students to explore an important topic across the disciplines. The desired end is the discourse. The play is not the end; rather, it is the catalyst for the discourse.

Both Santa Margarita and Servite High School (Tri-School Theatre) have participated in the *Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project* in the past few years. I was able to see the production at Servite. It was extremely powerful. Besides experiencing a wonderful performance, we were able to view and also participate in some of the discourse. Students' work from all subject areas was posted in the lobby, and there was even an area where audience members could write responses to students' written reflections. Amazing.

In case you're interested, I have also attached a page of curriculum suggestions and the Tri-School Theatre's brochure.

Thank you for your support. Have a great weekend!

Anna-Lisa

Anna-Lisa George

English Department

Academic Decathlon Coach

Mater Dei High School

Subject: Fwd: Project: Discourse 2011

Dear level chairs,

I am sending the email from Patrick about project discourse. It is time to have some discussions on the levels regarding the lessons we can design for this school-wide endeavor. What a powerful opportunity we have through this play to discuss moral and ethical issues surrounding imprisonment, rehabilitation, death penalty, reconciliation and many others.

It is my hope that this material in some way aligns with the curriculum you are already teaching.

Blessings

Lynne Firpo
Religious Studies Department
Mater Dei high School

Begin forwarded message:

Subject: Project: Discourse 2011

Dept. Heads,

As introduced in Curriculum Committee last spring, this year's Project: Discourse will be "Dead Man Walking". It's based on the autobiography by Sister Helen Prejean. The purpose is to promote discussion on a campus wide level about the issues raised by the script (poverty, teen safety, death penalty, community service, dignity, etc).

Please brainstorm with your department about ways in which they can teach an aspect of play in their classrooms this fall. Most students will be attending the production on November 16, 17, 21 & 22.

Anna-Lisa George is the curriculum coordinator for this event. We will be contacting you soon to figure out how your department can be part of this educational experience. Recently Servite and Santa Margarita schools have produced the Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project, they incorporated most subjects into the process. I'm looking forward to what you can offer.

For more info, please visit DMWplay.org

Thank you,
Mr. Patrick Williams
Director of Performing Arts
Mater Dei High School

5/18/2012

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Friday, September 16, 2011 11:27 AM
To: George, Anna-Lisa
Subject: FW: Dead Man Walking curriculum
Attachments: Curriculum suggestions.doc; tri-fold brochure- catholic.pub; info.doc; DMW notes.doc

Mr. Patrick Williams
 Director of Performing Arts
 Mater Dei High School
 (714) 957-3798

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From: Katnic, Tanya
Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2011 11:14 AM
To: Barsuglia, Brian; Mansouri, Roza; Firpo, Lynne; Francis, Lewis; Melvin, Scott; Smith, Sean; Reynolds, James; Wilson, Catherine
Cc: Welsh-Treglia, Anne; Williams, Patrick; Beringer, Mike
Subject: Dead Man Walking curriculum

Dear Department Chairs:

A few years back, *Servite* presented Project Discourse: *Dead Man Walking*. Attached are suggestions for incorporating the play into the curriculum.

I haven't heard from the English Dept. Chair from Santa Margarita, but I am hoping she gets back to me. They presented *DMW* last year.

Tanya Katnic

From: Hillary Pearson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 14, 2011 11:13 AM
To: Eileen McCoy
Subject: DMW resources

Some of the statistics in the trifold are probably outdated, but it's at least a starting point.
 Hope this helps!

--

Hillary Pearson
 Executive Artistic Director
 Tri-School Theatre
 [REDACTED]

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Saturday, November 12, 2011 12:39 PM
To: Head, Nancy
Subject: Re: DMW Esp. I & III H instructions

Nancy,

This is fantastic.
Thank you for participating in discourse.

Patrick

Sent from my iPad

On Nov 12, 2011, at 10:19 AM, "Head, Nancy" <nhead@materdei.org> wrote:

> Good morning Anna-Lisa,
>
> Here are the instructions for Spanish I (in English) and Spanish III Honors ((in Spanish), plus a translation of the Spanish instructions. I ended up giving the level III kids a few more items to research, so this is the updated version. Let me know if this is what you need or if you need this in a different format.
>
> Have a good weekend!
> Nancy
> <DMW Esp. I & III H instructions.pdf>
>
>
>
> Sent from my iPad

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2011 2:27 PM
To: Upham, Dorinda
Cc: George, Anna-Lisa; Jacobson, Melissa; Pescetti, Karen
Subject: Prj Discourse dates
Dorinda,

All students will be attending the **80 minute play/presentation of DMW on Nov 16, 17, 21 & 22** during their English blocks.

Religion classes will attend and participate in guest discussions during all class periods on **Friday Nov 18**.

The full-length performances will be held on:

Friday Nov 18 7:30pm

Saturday Nov 19 7:30pm

Tuesday Nov 22 7:30pm

I have more seats available than what I will be able to sell, so I can offer you some free tickets to give to your organizations.

We will have the actual tickets in November, you could give them to your people or we could hold them at will call for the night of the shows.


I am comfortable offering you **40 tickets per evening** (No Charge, free) that you can give to groups.

Regular tickets will also be available for purchase \$15 adult and \$10 students.

Thank you,

Mr. Patrick Williams

Director of Performing Arts
Mater Dei High School



PROJECT: DISCOURSE

THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT

English Department Lesson Ideas

All students should at least...

- be exposed to the passage from *Dead Man Walking*, before the student forum
- respond to the passage (preferably in writing)
- participate in a post-forum class discussion of their written reflections from the forum

Sample Lesson

Part 1 - Choral Reading

- 1) Distribute passage (hard copy or electronic - students can open in Notetaker HD)
- 2) Teacher reads passage aloud. Students highlight words & phrases that stand out to them--that speak to them in some way.
- 3) Teacher does a second reading of passage. This time, students join in and say aloud the parts they highlighted. This can be very powerful.

Part 2 - Found Poem

- 1) Students each compose a "found poem" based on the passage. They may reorder lines, change/add punctuation, etc.
 - Some helpful descriptions of found poetry:
 - <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/5780>
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Found_poetry
- 2) Several volunteers share their found poems (project on screen)

Part 3 - Response to Found Poems

- Students write responses to the found poetry (or to the whole experience)
Responses may take any form.

Ideas for Additional Lessons

1. Connect the following concepts to the literature currently being studied
 - DEATH
 - DIGNITY
 - DEVOTION
 - SACRIFICE
 - REDEMPTION
 - JUSTICEAlso...
 - COMPASSION
 - PERSPECTIVE
2. Have students research aspects of the novel, the play, the case, the characters, etc.

The motto of the group is "Give sorrow words," and, oh God, they do.

He was going out to be with the guys. I told him to take his jacket. Those were my last words to him.

My little 12-year-old daughter was stabbed to death in our back yard by my son's best friend. He had spent the night at our house and gone to church with us that very morning. Her little skiing outfit is still in the closet. I can't give it away.

When our child was killed, it took over a week to find her body. The D.A.'s office treated us like we were the criminals. Whenever we telephoned to find out what was happening, they brushed us off. They wouldn't tell us when the trial was happening. They wouldn't tell us anything.

Our daughter was killed by her ex-husband in our front yard with her children watching. *Bang! Bang! Bang!* He shot her, then himself right there on the front lawn ...

Friends were supportive at first, at the time our son was killed, but now they avoid us. They don't know what to say, what to do. If you bring up your child's death, they change the subject. I keep getting the feeling that they think I should be able to put his death behind me by now and get on with my life. People have no idea what you go through when something like this happens to you.

My wife and I went to the sheriffs office to apply for victim compensation funds. A deputy rifled through a few drawers and said, "Don't know nothin' about these funds. Why don't y'all write to Ann Landers? She helps people."

My husband and I are getting a separation. We just have different ways of dealing with our son's death. He wanted to get rid of all his clothes right away. I wanted to keep them. He said he had to move on in his life and I'm still grieving. "Until death do us part" has new meaning for me.

My daughter's killer can possibly get out on parole in another year. He's only served six years. I can't bear the thought that he would be out a free man and she is buried in the ground and dead forever. Six years is nothing. This isn't justice. My husband and I are planning to attend the parole hearing.

I lost my job. Just couldn't pull it together. I'd be staring out of the window and couldn't concentrate. They let me go last week.

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Monday, November 14, 2011 2:53 PM
To: * All Users / Mater Dei
Subject: Dead Man Walking - Performance & Ticket Info

PROJECT: DISCOURSE

THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT

SCHEDULE OF DISCOURSE EVENTS

Wednesday Nov 16: English Classes attend Forum Blocks 2 & 4

Thursday Nov 17: English Classes attend Forum Blocks 0 & 6

Friday Nov 18: Religion Classes have Guest Speakers during all periods
7:30pm Full Production *Dead Man Walking*

Saturday Nov 19: 7:30pm Full Production *Dead Man Walking*

Monday Nov 21: English Classes attend Forum Block 5

Tuesday Nov 22: English Classes attend Forum Blocks 1 & 3
7:30pm Full Production *Dead Man Walking*

TICKET INFORMATION

Mater Dei Faculty & Staff can receive complimentary admission for self and one guest.
Just present Mater Dei ID at the Performance

Additional Tickets may be purchased at the Performing Arts Office.
Pre-sale student tickets are \$10, Adults \$15
All tickets at the show will be \$15

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2011 11:57 AM
To: Hall, Colleen
Cc: 'Kristi kawabe'; George, Anna-Lisa
Subject: FW: Project discorce
 Ms Hall,

I am okay with however many students your club wants to make the Rachel's Challenge presentation work.

I need them to arrive during the passing period before the following classes. They will be presenting about half way into the block period, after they present they can then return to their classes.

Wed 11/16 – 8:55 arrive, Forum is Block 4
 - 12:55 arrive, Forum is Block 2

Thurs 11/17 – 7:10 arrive, Forum is Block 0
 - 11:20 arrive, Forum is Block 6

Mon 11/21 – Arrive 11:20, Forum is Block 5

Tues 11/22 – Arrive 8:55, Forum is Block 3
 - 12:55 arrive, Forum is Block 1

Thank you,
Mr. Patrick Williams
 Director of Performing Arts
 Mater Dei High School
 (714) 957-3798

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From: Kristi kawabe [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2011 10:06 AM
To: Williams, Patrick
Subject: Project discorce

This email is automatically sent from http://www.materdei.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=120599&type=u by IP address 216.31.149.98 (computer id: 0.48433725788399584) on Tuesday, November 15, 2011 at 10:06 AM US/Pacific timezone.

From: Kristi kawabe <Kawabe.kr.m@students.materdei.org>
Subject: Project discorce

Dear mr. Williams,
 I spoke to you last week about talking for rachel's challenge with Anthony. But I was wondering if we could use another commissioner and president of the club in our presentation... And also what time again did you want us to meet for 2 block? And the rest. Thank you!

[If you feel this email contains abusive content, please click here.](#)

PROJECT: DISCOURSE

THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT

English Classes

Before the Forum

Passage

1. Expose students to the passage from *Dead Man Walking*.
2. Have students respond to the passage

Preparation for Forum

3. Guide students to create Pages document
 - Name it... DMW Block # Last Name
(example: DMW Block 5 Jones)
 - Have students type the word DEATH, leave some blank lines, then type COMPASSION
4. On your own, create an Edmodo (or Turnitin.com) assignment that states...
"After attending the Project Discourse Forum, please copy and paste your responses here."

On the Day of the Forum

In the Classroom

1. Greet students at classroom. Take attendance.
2. Ask students to turn on iPad. Demonstrate how to turn on Airplane Mode to disable the wifi.
3. Have students open their Pages app and access their Forum document.
4. Students leave all items on their desks (backpacks), except for the iPad.

Entering Monarch Pavilion

5. Walk with your class to the Monarch Pavilion. Each class will have two rows to sit in. Please make sure your class remains together and separate any students who should not sit together. Sit with your students.

During the Forum

6. Students will receive cues as to when to turn on and off the iPad .
7. There are two portions in which the students will type on the iPad. At those times, stand up and observe to make sure they are typing into their Pages documents.

After the Forum

8. You should have ten minutes to walk your students back to class.
9. Before the end of the period, have your students submit their responses to the Edmodo assignment.
10. Read through your students responses. Please pick four that are notable and email those to pwilliams@materdei.org

Next Class Day

In the Classroom

1. Share with your students the four notable responses. Maybe write them on the marker board or project them in class. Perhaps also ask for volunteers to share their responses.
2. Develop a discussion using these responses and try to tie the remarks back to something from your current unit of study. (Example: if a student response is about rules, draw a connection to Lord of the Flies, etc.)

Patrick Williams sends many thanks to you for playing such a large part in this endeavor!

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Monday, November 07, 2011 8:29 AM
To: George, Anna-Lisa; Carrillo, Melanie; Jacobson, Melissa
Cc: Barsuglia, Brian; Hickman, Kevin
Subject: FORUM idea & timeline

Project: Discourse 2011 - Forum Plan (as of 11/05/11) Forum will take place for English classes Nov 16, 17, 21 & 22 in Monarch Pavilion

TIME DESCRIPTION

- 15.00 Preshow warm-up and prayer
All cast in Proj:Discourse shirts & or show costumes
Cast Places & Focus

0:00 Certain Actors leave Little Theatre to join English Class in classroom
Teachers take attendance and remind students about Forum
Teachers instruct/demonstrate how to use airplane mode to disable wifi
Teachers instruct students to open Pages document created day before
Pages document has two words: DEATH COMPASSION

0:04 Screen displays: Project: Discourse Logo
Students are instructed to bring their iPad2,
but to only use it when instructed to

0:05 Students leave their backpacks, etc in classroom and quietly walk to the Monarch Pavilion
Cast members play instruments in Monarch Pavilion
Audience Enters into Monarch Pavilion.
Teacher seats their students in the designated two rows

0:10 Cast members stop playing the instruments

0:11 Black out, Screen changes to read: DEATH
Cast members perform the Ending to Act 1

0:20 Blackout
Screen changes to display: Cast Quote 1, Cast Quote 2, Sister Helen Prejean
Quote 1
Screen Changes to Read: What is your perspective?

0:21 Lights on audience rise
Cast members seen on stage typing onto their iPad2 Pages document
Other Cast members are changing into costumes
Audience should be typing on their iPad2s automatically, but in case the screen will change to read: Type about death in Pages
Screen reads: DEATH

0:24 Kylie McCaffrey enters stage and goes around to read some of the cast member's quotes out loud
Then she walks into the audience and non-verbally asks to read what audience members have written and proceeds to read their iPad2 Pages documents out loud to cast and audience
Certain Ensemble Cast members leave to go back to class, expected to arrive at class within four minutes.
Cast members change set for the next portion - Twelve Minute Teaser

0:29 After reading max 3 quotes, Kylie says: Thank you for sharing your perspectives. If you want you can check our blog out to read other perspectives. I created this blog using tumblr. It's something we can use for future Project: Discourse shows. We also have pics on here from the show two years ago. It was Anne Frank and lots of departments on campus attended a portion of the play and then attended a guest speaker day. On Friday Nov 16th

you'll get to attend a guest speaker forum with your Religion Dept. Our show is more than just a show, it's a chance for students and teachers to discuss important issues. Thanks for writing about death, soon you will write about Caompassion, but for now please darken your iPads and close the covers. When you get back to class, turn in your Pages document for a chance to have your perspective to be posted on our blog. We are performing the entire play of Dead Man Walking on Fri, Sat and Tuesday Night. You can get tickets from the Performing Arts Office. Now we have a twelve minute teaser or our play. Friends and Classmates, let's hear it for these theatre kids.

Screen displays: Images and Screen Shots of the Project Discourse Tumblr.
Then an image of Edmodo symbol and back to tumblr

0:34 Blackout Audience and Screen

Lights rise on twelve minute teaser

Screen displays: Slides assigned to those scenes in full-length production, ex: Lucille's House image, Prison Bars, etc.

0:46 Blackout at end

Screen reads: COMPASSION

Screen reads: Rachel's Challenge - Theme 2011-2012 Compassion

Lights on stage at 75%

Members of Rachel's Challenge enter stage with a microphone and speak about the Monarch commitment to Rachel's Challenge. They introduce the theme of compassion and encourage the audience to define COMPASSION in a paragraph quote on their iPad2 Pages document

Screen display during the presentation: Various screen shots of Rachel's Challenge website

0:50 Lights rise to 50% on Audience, they should write on their iPad2

Screen Reads: COMPASSION What's your perspective?

Cast members change set pieces for next scene

0:54 Screen Reads: Thank you.

Screen Displays: Dead Man Walking poster image

Blackout audience and stage

0:55 Screen changes to read: RACE

Lights rise on lower stage center 60% then rise to be 80%

Sound of rain

Cast members perform scene: Sr. Prejean, Matt Poncelet

Blackout

0:59 Screen reads: FAMILY

Cast Members change set for next scene

Lights rise on lower stage wash 100%

Cast Members perform scene: Sr. Prejean, Matt Poncelt, Lucille, Mitch, Troy, Jim, Warden Hartman, Sgt. Beliveau & 4 Guards

Blackout

0:65 Screen reads: CAPITOL PUNISHMENT

Lights rise on stage right & stage left pools, alternate

Cast Members perform: Lawyers Hilton Barber & Guy Giralardi

Screen changes to display: various images of death penalty methods and detail of the lethal injection process

Blackout

0:70 Screen reads: PERSPECTIVE

Lights rise on a student presentation on the Stage Left platform.

Screen shows their presentation if needed.

Screen reads: Thank you.

0:75 Screen reads: Thank you for joining Project: Discourse

Screen displays: QR code (which routes to projectdiscourse@tumblr.com)

Lights rise on audience and stage 50%

0:77 Screen reads: Join us in Prayer

Cast members lead the audience in a prayer (Shakespeare Mercy Prayer)

Screen Reads: Thank you for sharing your perspective

0:80 Stage lights blackout

Audience lights rise

Screen displays: Project: Discourse image

Teachers non-verbally instruct their students as to when to stand and exit Monarch Pavilion

Teachers remain silent en route to classroom, allow students to begin to talk on their own

0:85 When in class, teacher displays on screen: Edmodo assignment

Without any verbal instruction, teacher encourage students to sit

After reading the Edmodo assignment, students should copy & paste their Pages documents into the Edmodo assignment

Teacher turns off Edmodo display before student responses start uploading.

0:90 At end of class Teacher tell students: Thank You for Your Perspective

Later that day:

Teachers read the Edmodo assignments and email four notable responses to pwilliams@materdei.org

Next day:

Teachers can display the four notable Edmodo responses for class discussion &/or display and discuss the projectdiscourse@tumblr

Director chooses some of the student responses to put on tumblr and some to print up to have displayed at event

Kylie McCaffrey post responses on tumblr and documents the Forums through pictures and journalism

FORUM & Show CAST TIMES Draft 1

CAST A (Those who perform the whole Forum)

11/16 – Arrive 8:00am

Perform 9:00am to 10:30am

Go To Upper Lunch 10:45am

Return to LT 11:20

Perform 1:00pm

Leave at 2:40pm

11/17 – Arrive 6:30am

Perform 7:15am to 8:40am

Go to Block 3 at 9:05am

Return to LT at 10:40am

Perform 11:30am

Lunch Provided 12:50pm

Final Dress Rehearsal 1:15 to 6:00pm

11/18 – Arrive by 6:00pm

Perform Show #1 7:30 to 10:00pm

11/19 – Arrive by 6:00pm

Perform Show #2 7:30 to 10:00pm

11/21 – Arrive 10:20am

Perform 11:30am to 1:00pm

Lunch Provided 1:00pm

Go to Block 2 by 1:30pm

11/22 – Arrive 8:00am

Perform 9:00 to 10:30am

Go to regular Lunch and Block 6

Return to LT at 12:30pm

Perform 1:00 to 2:30

Go home to rest 2:45pm

Return for Show #3 6:00pm

Perform Show #3 7:30 to 10:00pm

Strike should be done by 11:00pm

CAST B (Those who perform the beginning of the Forum)

11/16 - Arrive 8:00am

Perform 9:00am

Go Back to class by 9:40am

Go to regular lunch

Return to LT 12:15pm

Perform 1:00pm

Go Back to class by 1:35pm

11/17 – Arrive 6:30am

Perform 7:15am

Return to Block 0 by 7:50am

Go to Block 3 at 9:05am

Return to LT at 10:40am

Perform 11:30am

Lunch Provided 12:50pm

Final Dress Rehearsal 1:15 to 6:00pm

11/18 – Arrive by 6:00pm

Perform Show #1 7:30 to 10:00pm

11/19 – Arrive by 6:00pm

Perform Show #2 7:30 to 10:00pm

11/21 – Arrive 10:00am

Perform 11:30am to 1:00pm

Lunch Provided 1:00pm

Go to Block 2 by 1:30pm

11/22 – Arrive 8:00am

Perform 9:00

Go to Block 3 at 9:30am

Go to regular Lunch and Block 6

Return to LT at 12:30pm

Perform 1:00

Go to Block 1 at 1:30pm

Go home to rest 2:35pm

Return for Show #3 6:00pm

Perform Show #3 7:30 to 10:00pm

Strike should be done by 11:00pm

Rachel's Challenge Members

WEDNESDAY

11/16 – Arrive 8:55am

Perform 9:00am to 10:00am

Arrive to LT 12:50

Perform 1:00pm to 2:00pm

THURSDAY

11/17 – Arrive 7:10 am

Perform 7:15am to 8:15am

Return to LT at 11:20am

Perform 11:30am to 12:30pm

MONDAY

11/21 – Arrive 11:20am

Perform 11:30am to 12:30pm

TUESDAY

11/22 – Arrive 8:55am

Perform 9:00 to 10:00am

Return to LT at 12:55pm

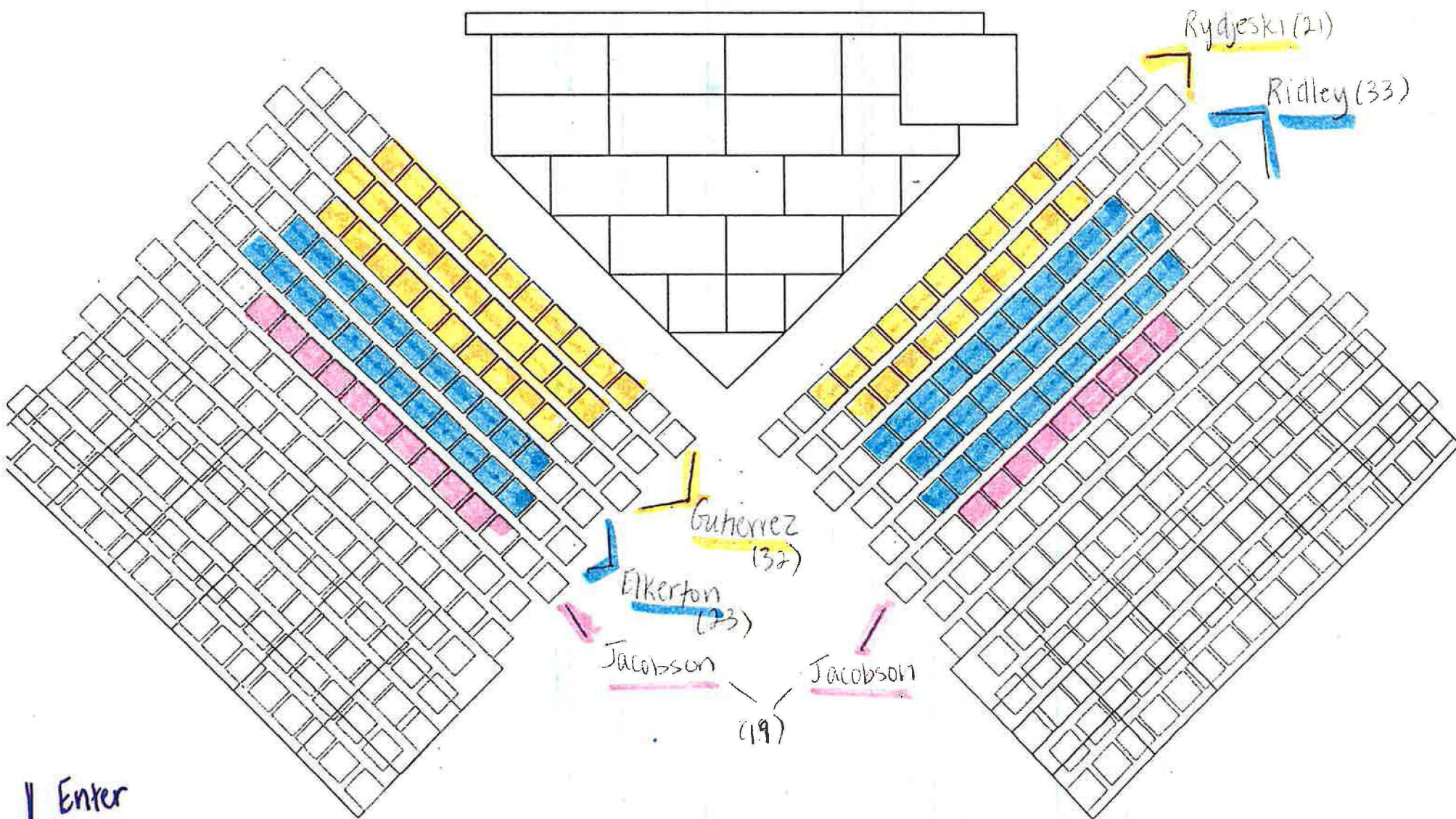
Perform 1:00 to 2:00

Project: Discourse FORUM PLAN

1. Eli plays Piano as audience enters
2. House & Stage lights go to dark
3. P. 52 to 54 Perform (End of Act 1)
4. Audience journal on iPad, some cast do too
 - 4b. Guards change set for Teaser
 - 4c. Some cast go back to class
 - 4d. Mics switch from Grievors to Teaser
5. Kylie talks about blog
6. Teaser performs
7. Rachels Challenge Presentation
8. Audience journal on iPad about compassion
9. Screen indicates to turn off iPads
- 10a. Race performs
 - 10b. Family performs
 - 10c. Capital Punishment performs
11. Department Discourse Presentations
12. Prayer lead by Casey, all cast still present join

Block 0

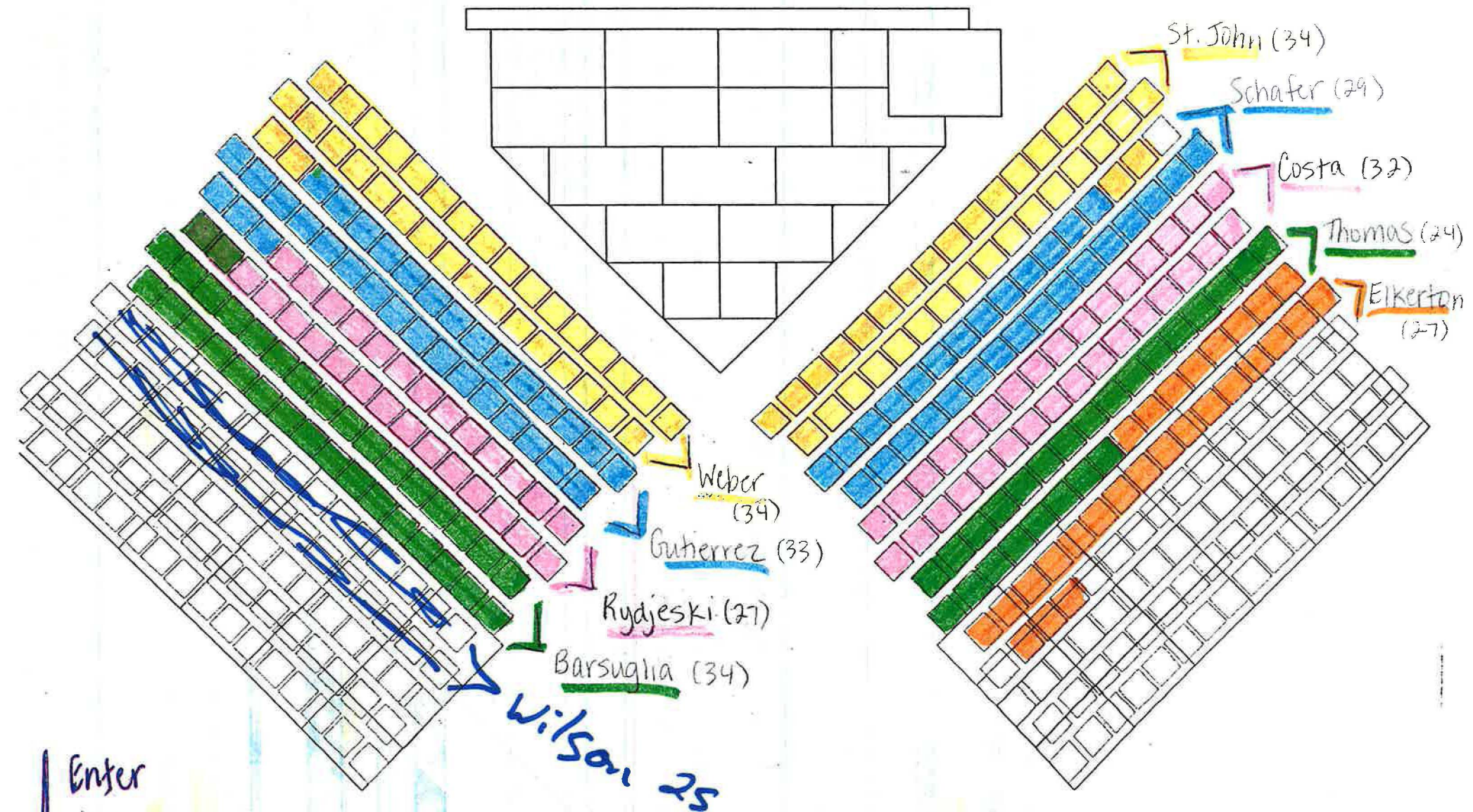
STAGE



Enter
Here

Block 6

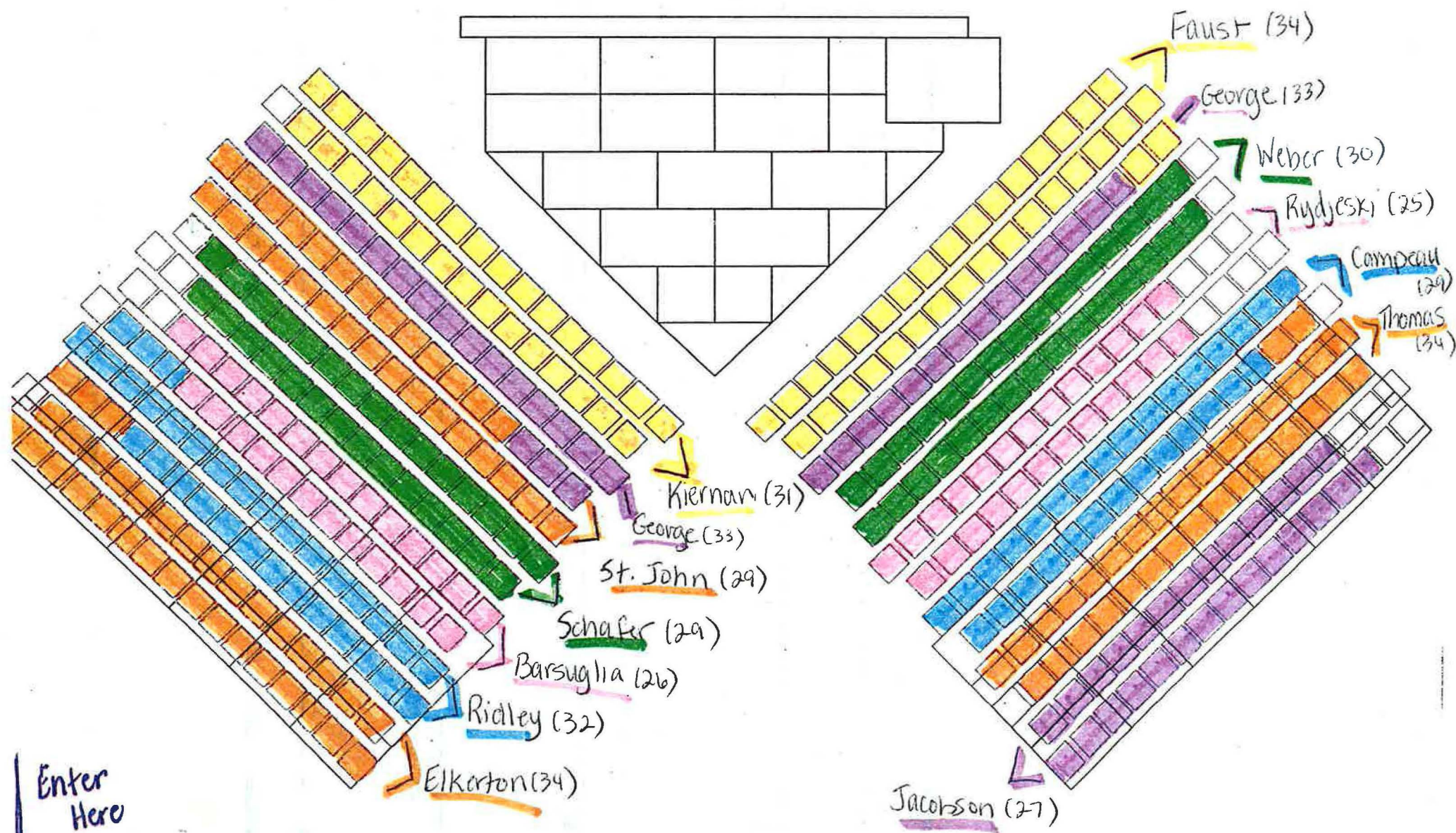
STAGE



Enter
Here

Block 4

STAGE



From: Jacobson, Melissa

Sent: Thursday, August 25, 2011 3:32 PM

To: Williams, Patrick

Subject: 0 period

Hi—There are five 0 period English classes, which means about 160 students (guessing 32 kids per class) who will need tickets to DMW for the public performances.

If they replace Dana then your audience by English class should be:

Block 1: 8 classes or about 256 students

Block 2: 10 classes or about 320 students

Block 3: 12 classes or about 384 students

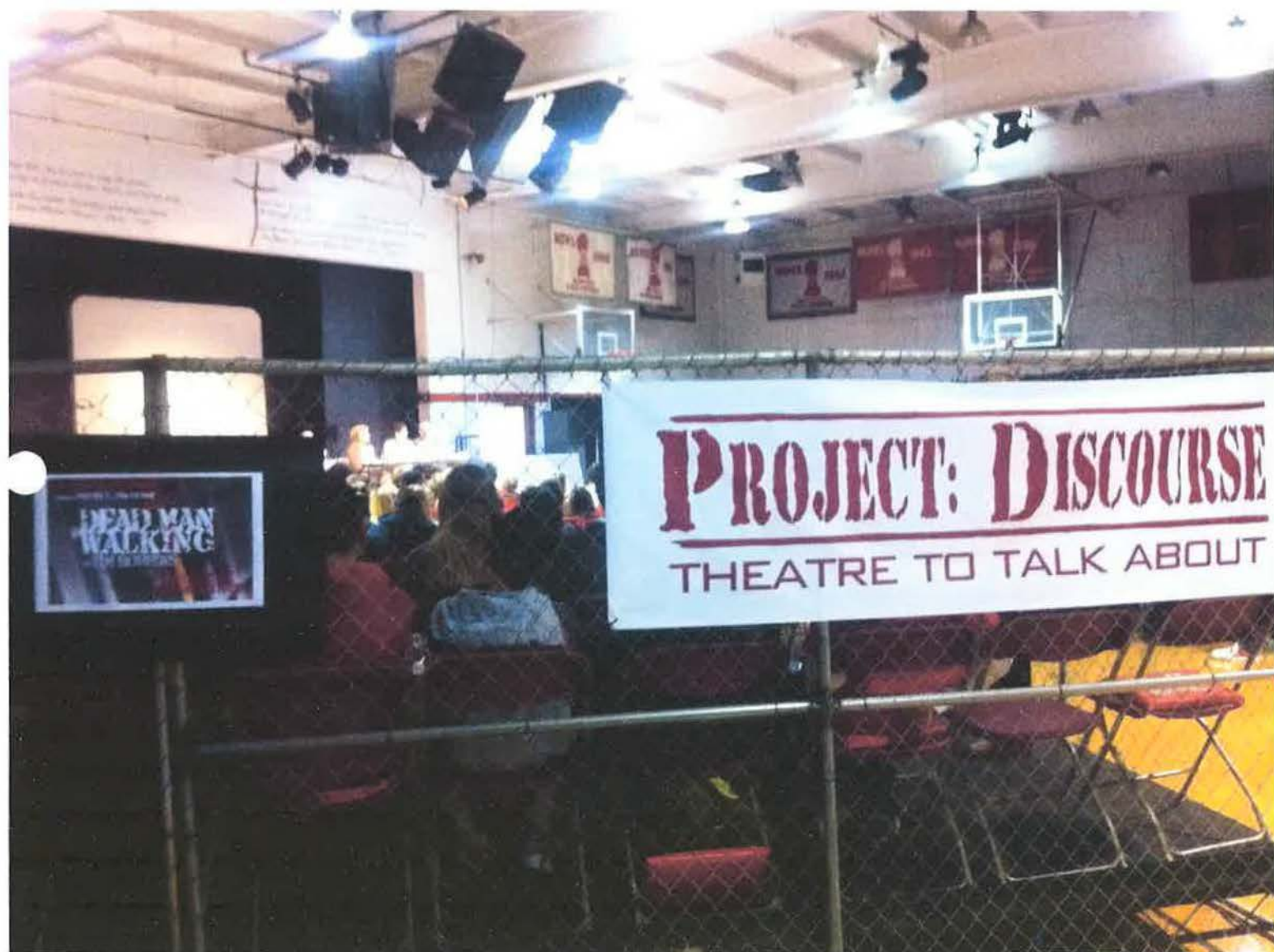
Block 4: 12 classes or about 384 students

Block 5: 12 classes or about 384 students

Block 6: 9 classes or about 288 students

I'll get more accurate figures after they decide on hiring or not.

Melissa



**What is your
perspective?**

PROJECT: DISCOURSE

THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT

"DIGNITY IS HAVING
PRIDE IN YOURSELF."

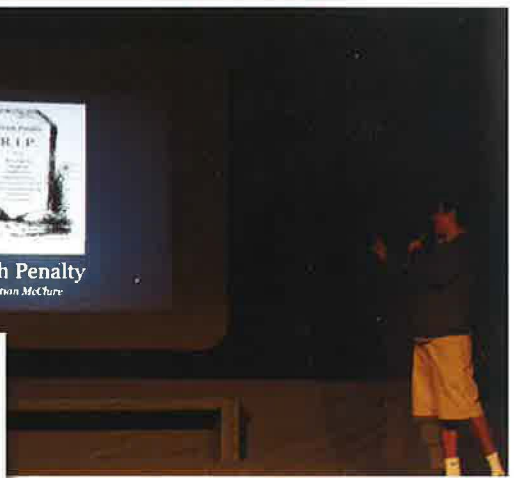
Emma, Cast Member



"I'll kill him
though," he
said. "In all his
greatness and
his glory."



Death Penalty
Christian McClure



DISCOURSE FORUM

"SEPARATION &
CHANGE: THAT IS WHAT
DEATH IS TO ME."

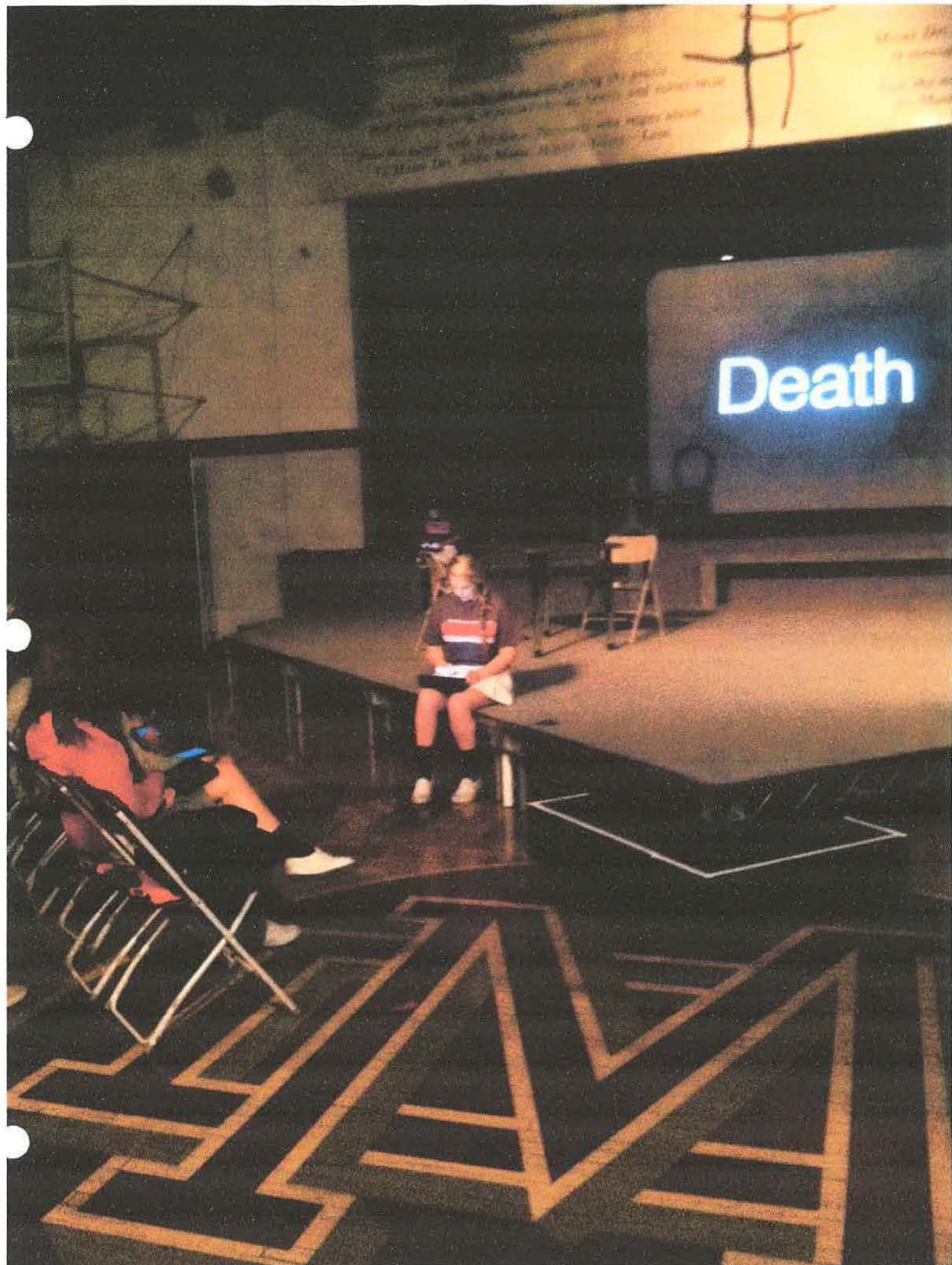
Kendra, Cast Member



Rachel's challenge

• "these hands belong
to Rachel Joy Scott
and will someday
touch millions of
people's hearts."





Death is...in a sense, when someone ceases to live. But does that mean they no longer exist? I'm not sure.

- Andrew, Audience Member

A place of no return, the one thing we cannot avoid. An eternal state of being or not being. Inevitable.

- Jack, Audience Member

Compassion: it always comes as a strong feeling. Sometimes it slowly grows, and others it just crashes down on you. It feels a lot like love...

- Dominique, Audience Member

I think that everyone deserves to be shown compassion, because every human needs to feel like they are loved. If no one cared about how others felt, the world would be a very dark place.

- Lauren, Audience Member

When one person dies, it kills a little of every of everyone else who knows them.

- Lizzie, Audience Member

Everyone deserves compassion. When one person suffers, we all suffer.

- Madison, Audience Member







Compassion





The quality of mercy is not strained.
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven,
Upon the place beneath.
It is twice blessed.
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
It is mightiest in the mightiest,
It becomes the throned monarch better than his crown.
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
An attribute to awe and majesty.
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings.
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself.
And earthly power dost thou become likest God's,
Where mercy seasons justice.

Portia, *Merchant of Venice* by Shakespeare

Project: Discourse Forums Closing Prayer read by Casey Breacher







Project: Discourse 2011

Posted on November 18, 2011 by mdhsperformarts



Our 3rd Annual *Project: Discourse* event is this week. It's more than just a play, rather a chance for students to be immersed in discussion about important social issues.

This year's production is *Dead Man Walking* by Tim Robbins. It is based on the autobiography by Sister Helen Prejean. This script was written specifically for High Schools to produce. It performs Nov 18, 19 & 22nd at 7:30pm. Please contact

pwilliams@materdei.org for tickets.

As part of the discourse, every department on campus has involved the themes of the play into their curriculum. Students have participated in class discussions, activities and assignments.

All students attended a Forum with their English classes in which they saw scenes from the play and then journaled on their iPad2. They also heard speeches from the Rachel's Challenge Club and various presentations of student work. Today, all students are attending a guest speaker panel during their Religion class time. Two speakers are Public Defenders from Orange County and San Bernadino county who spoke about capital punishment cases they have defended. Also, Sr. Suzanne Jabro spoke about her work with prisoners as a Sister of St. Joseph.

For more information about our Project: Discourse, please visit the student created bog:

projectdiscourse.tumblr.com

Patrick Williams, Director of Performing Arts

Like Be the first to like this.

This entry was posted in [Performing Arts](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).



Students reflected about a scene from *Dead Man Walking* by writing on their iPad2.



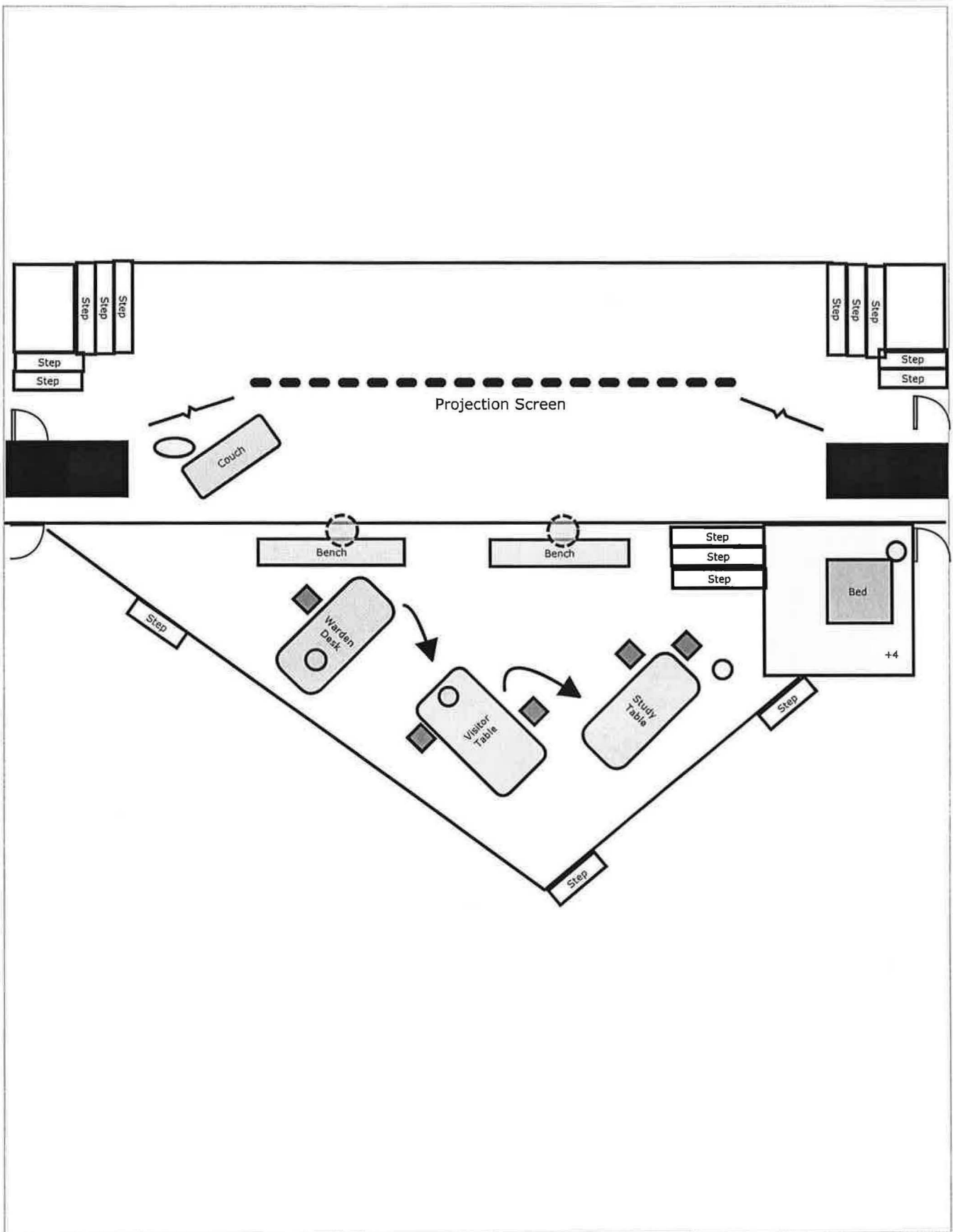
Mane Message

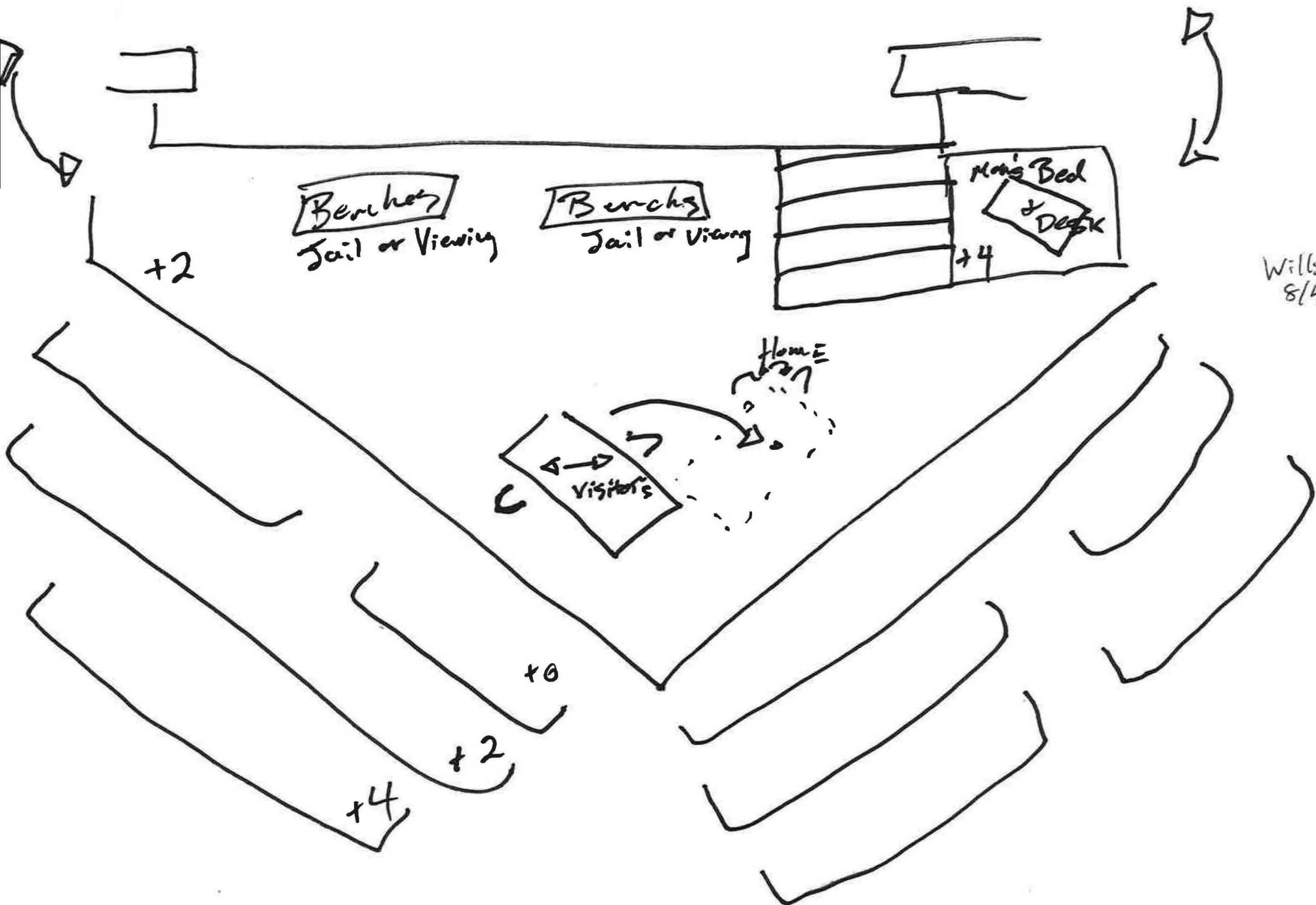
Some things you may not know about Mater Dei High School...

Plum + the water

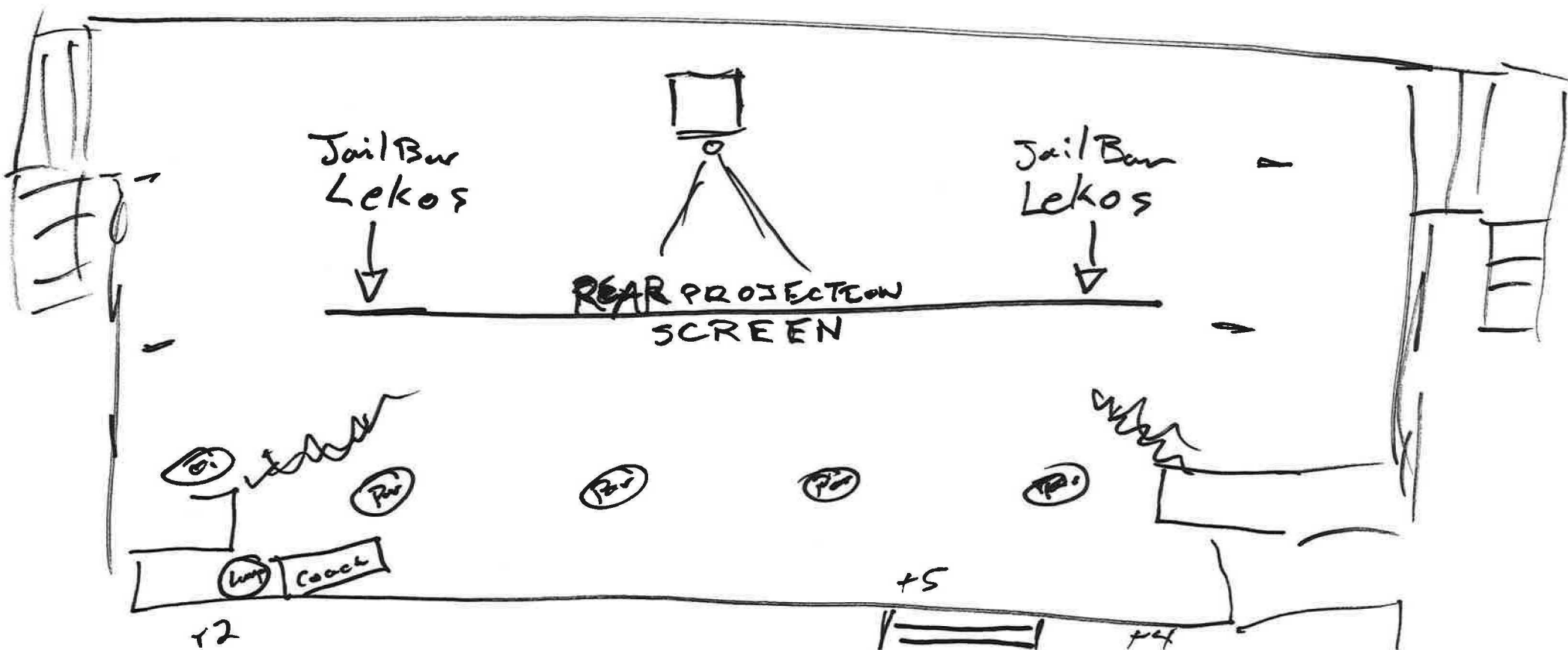


Williams
8/4/11

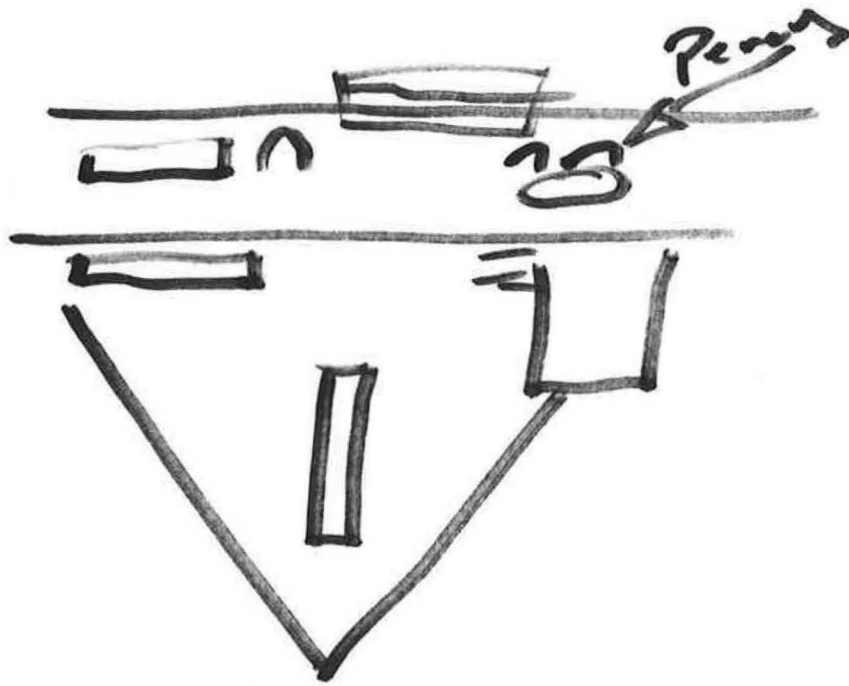




Williams
8/4/11

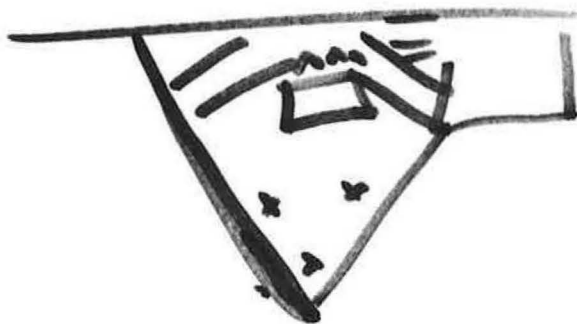


Sept. 22
later in Act I ide



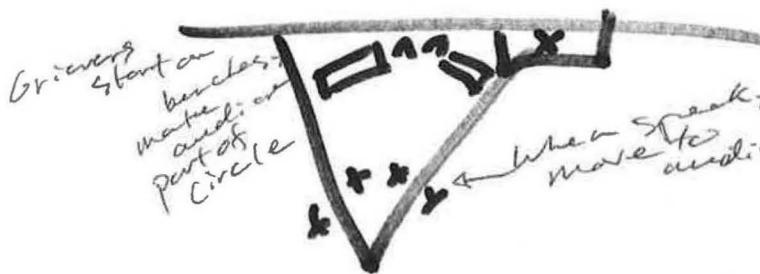
Act I

Rain/Race Scene



Act I

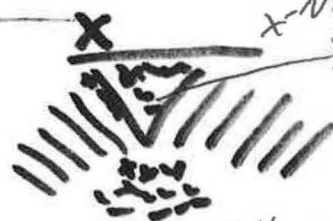
continuation



Act I

Grievors

Paclet & crying, scream
up on stage due to sightless w/ crutches



Act I

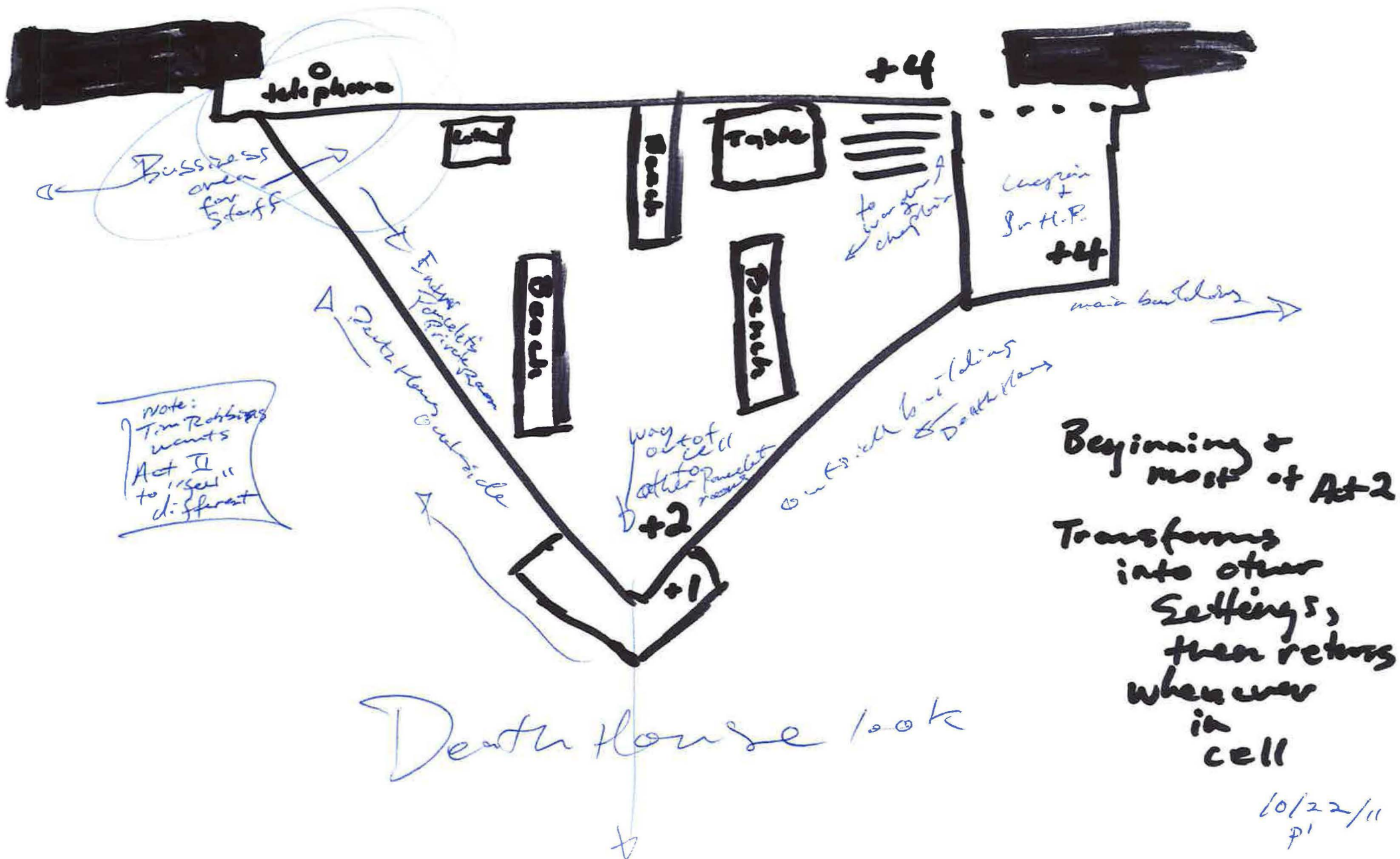
Protest

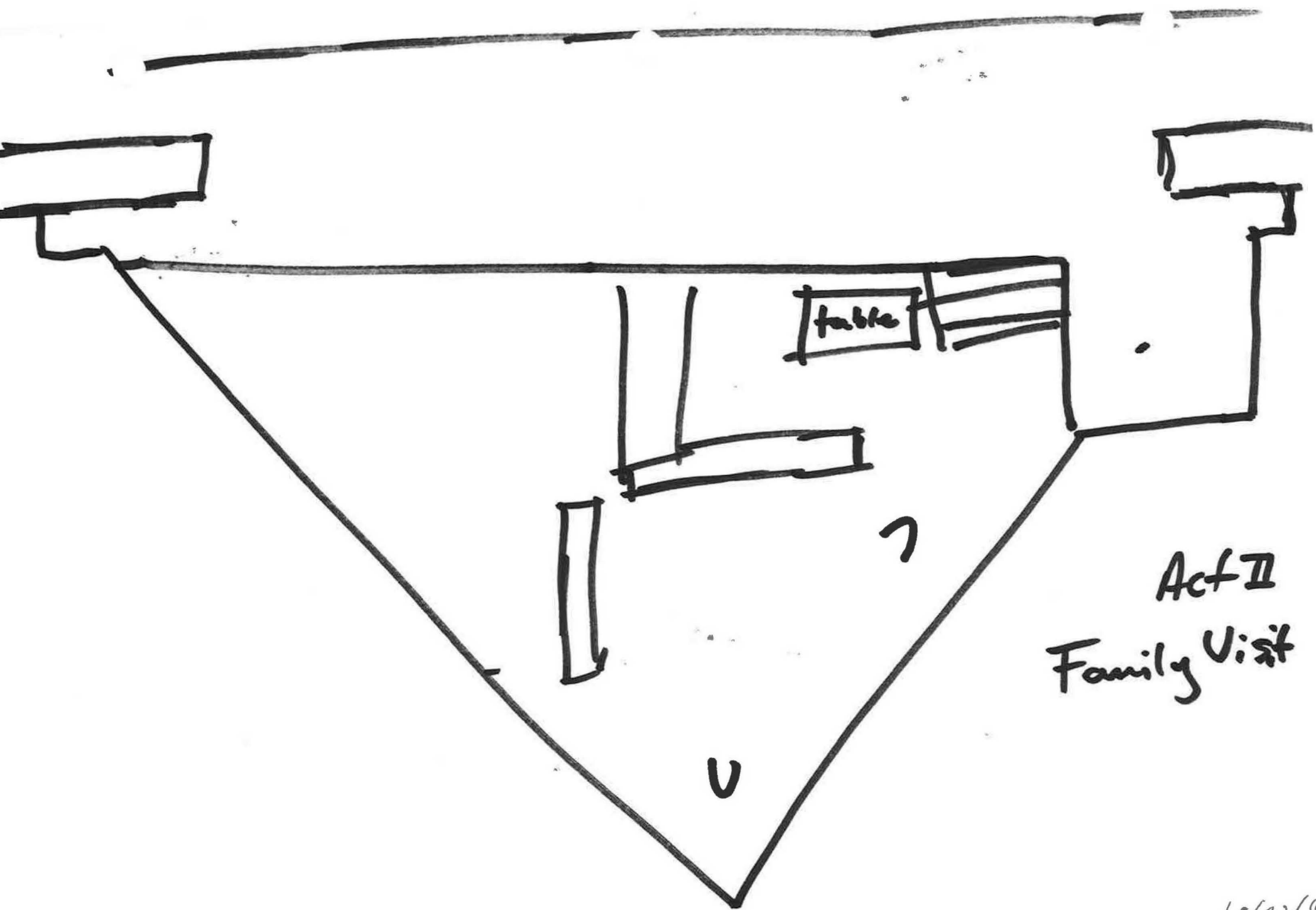
Fill empty gym floor with bunch of wigs, crutches, etc.

Protest w/ signs!
represent
Sister Helen
Dilemma
& Grievors

MIRROR
↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

Grey Black SCREEN Black CREY

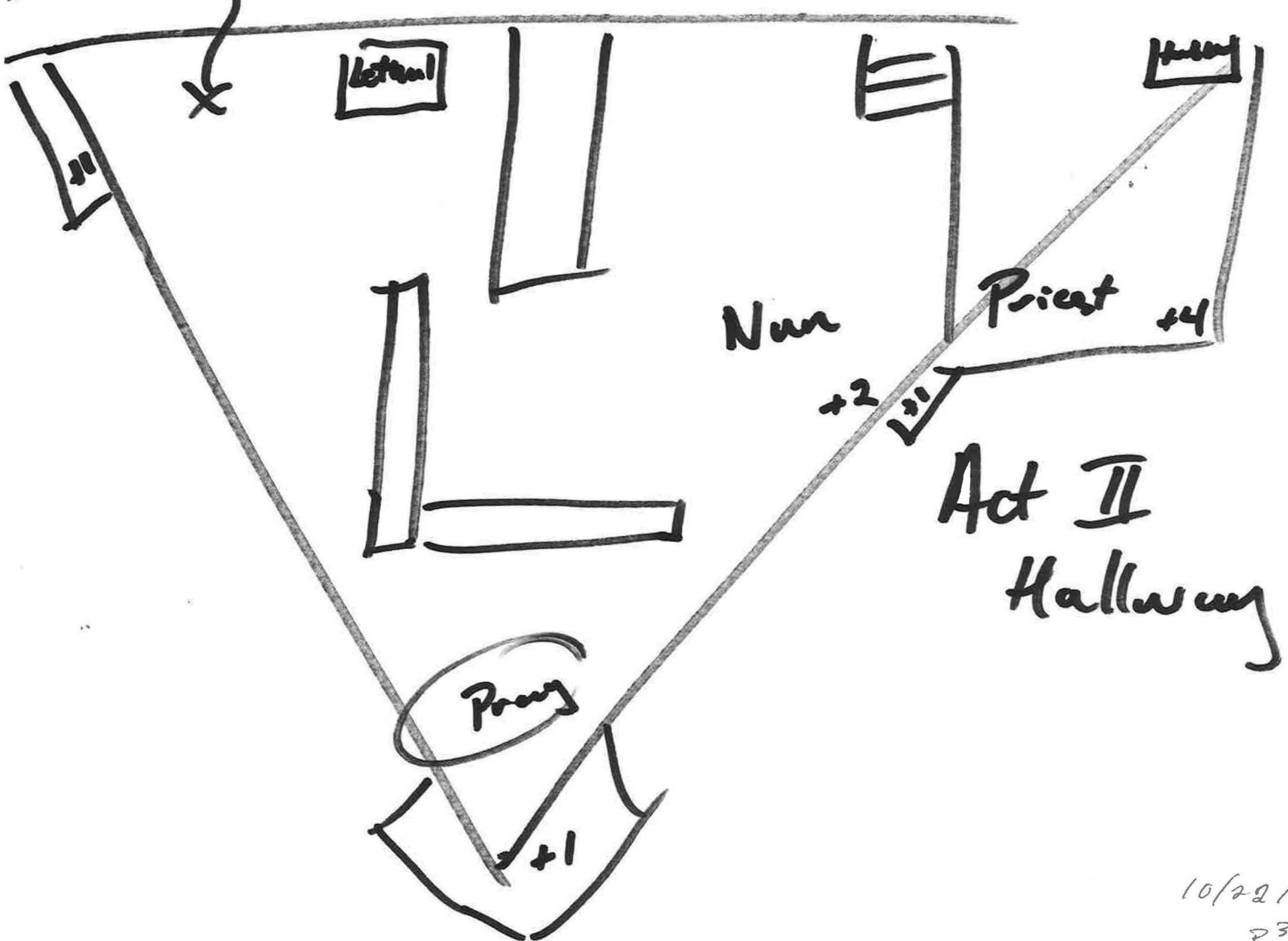


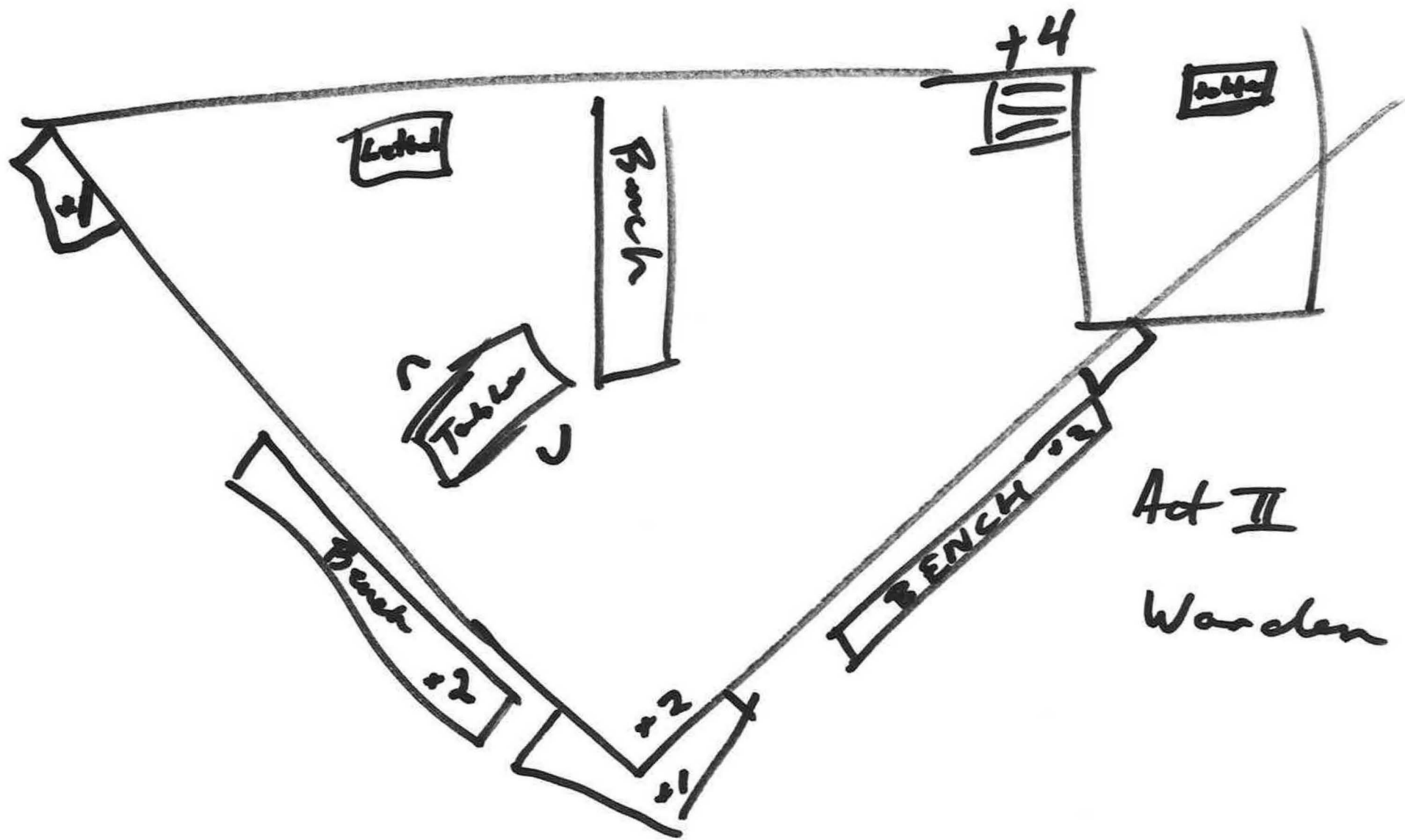


Act II
Family Visit

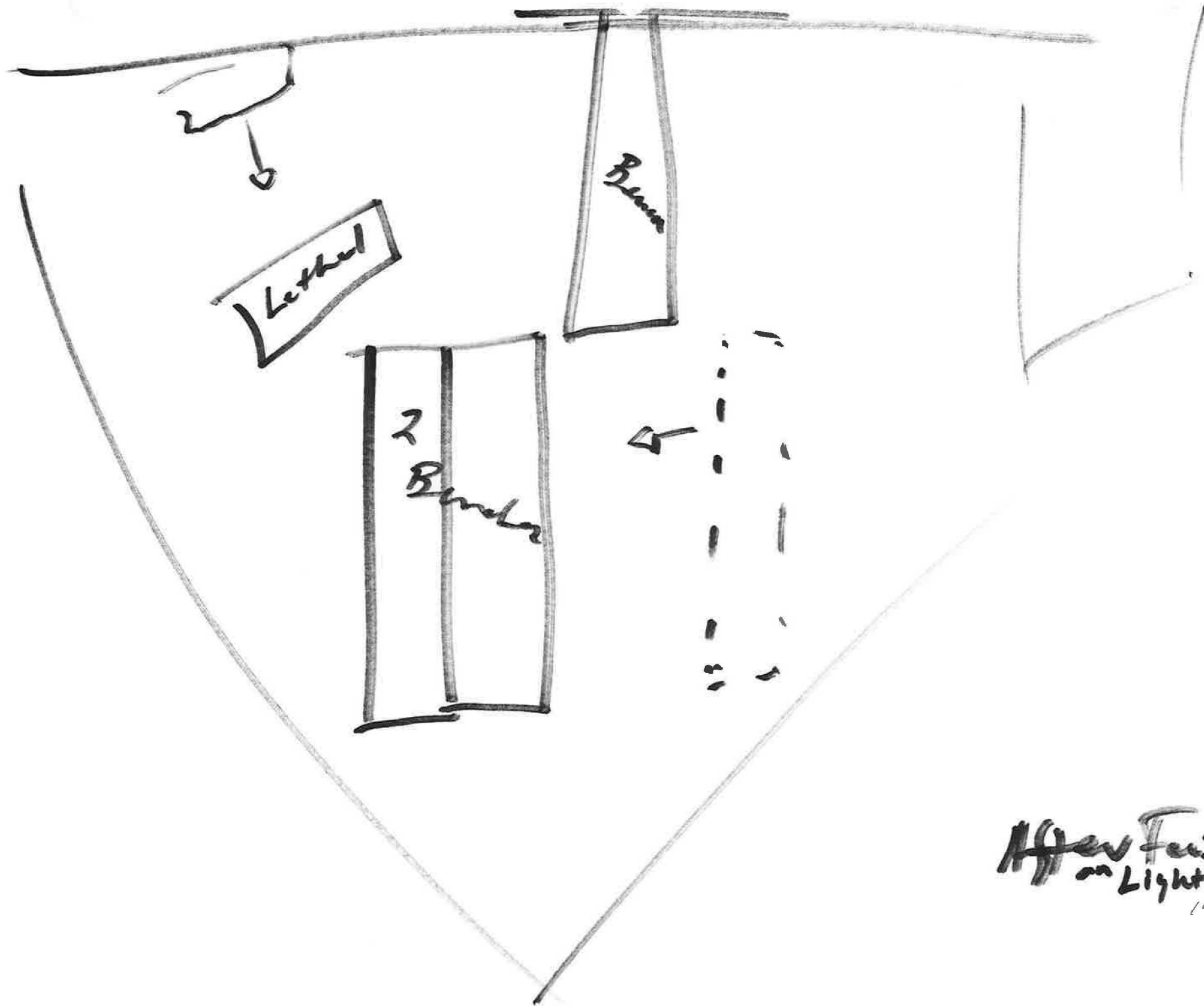
~~_____~~ Telephone

~~_____~~

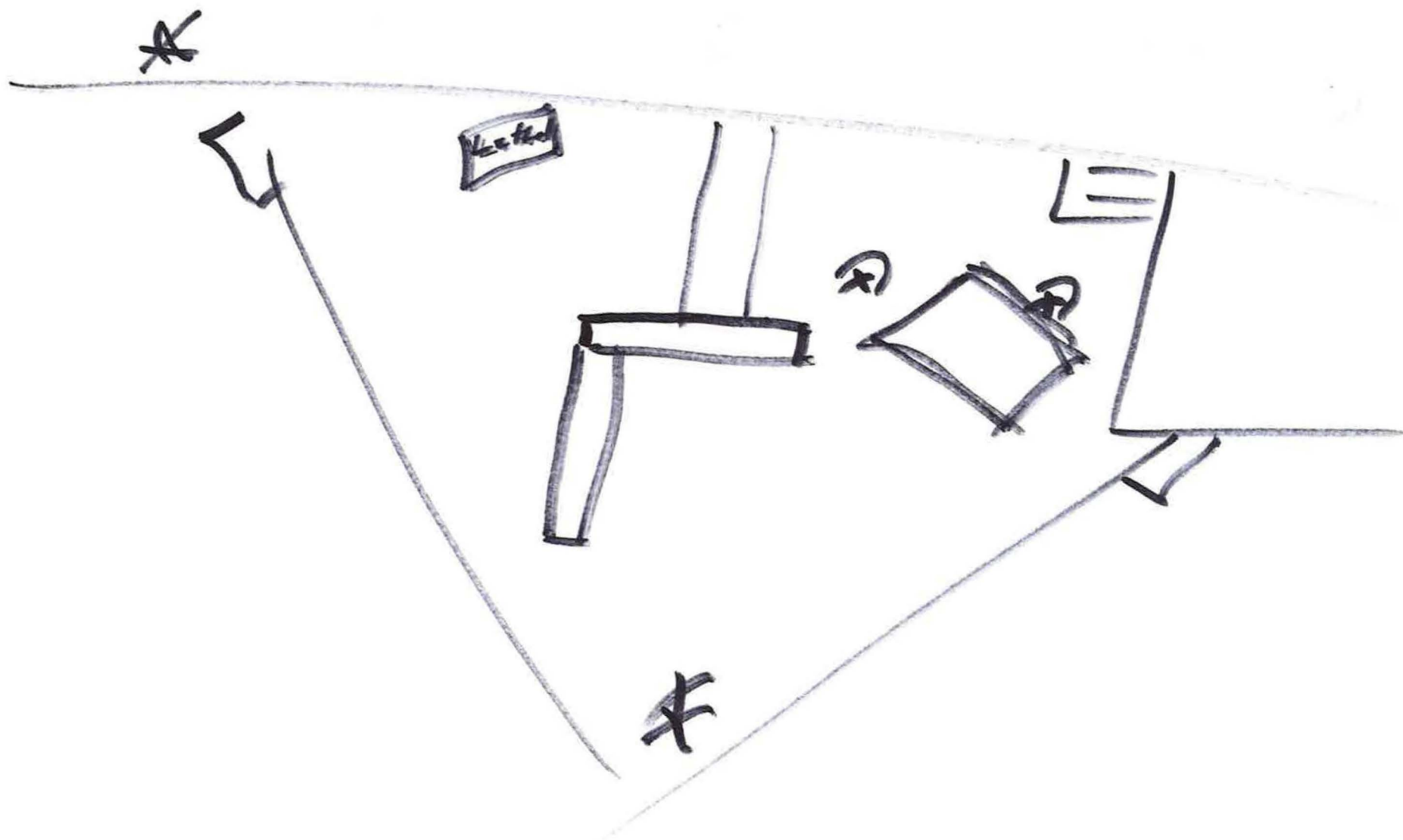




Act II
Warden

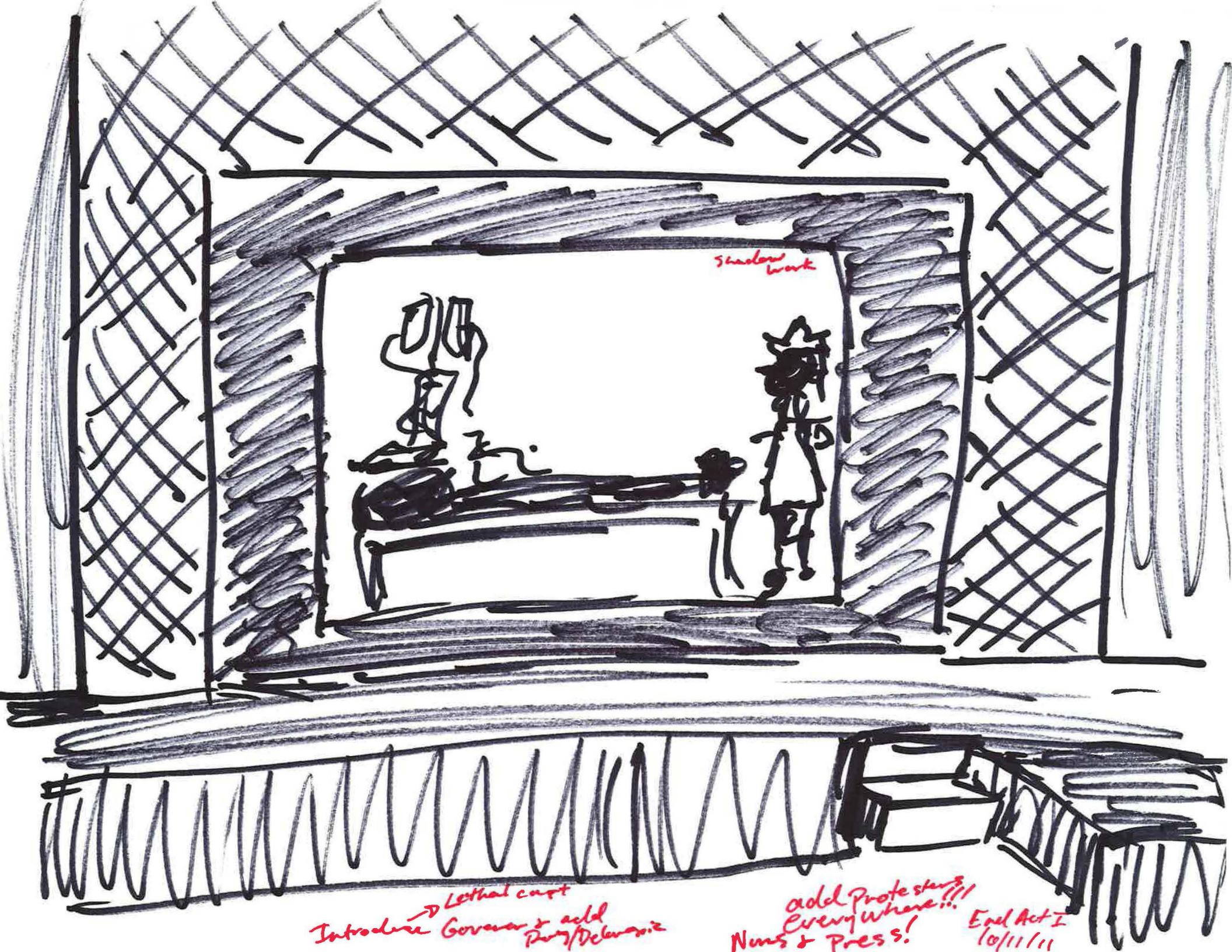


After Fire &
on Lights 66
100% 1/5



Lie Detector
+
to monitoring

10/22/76.

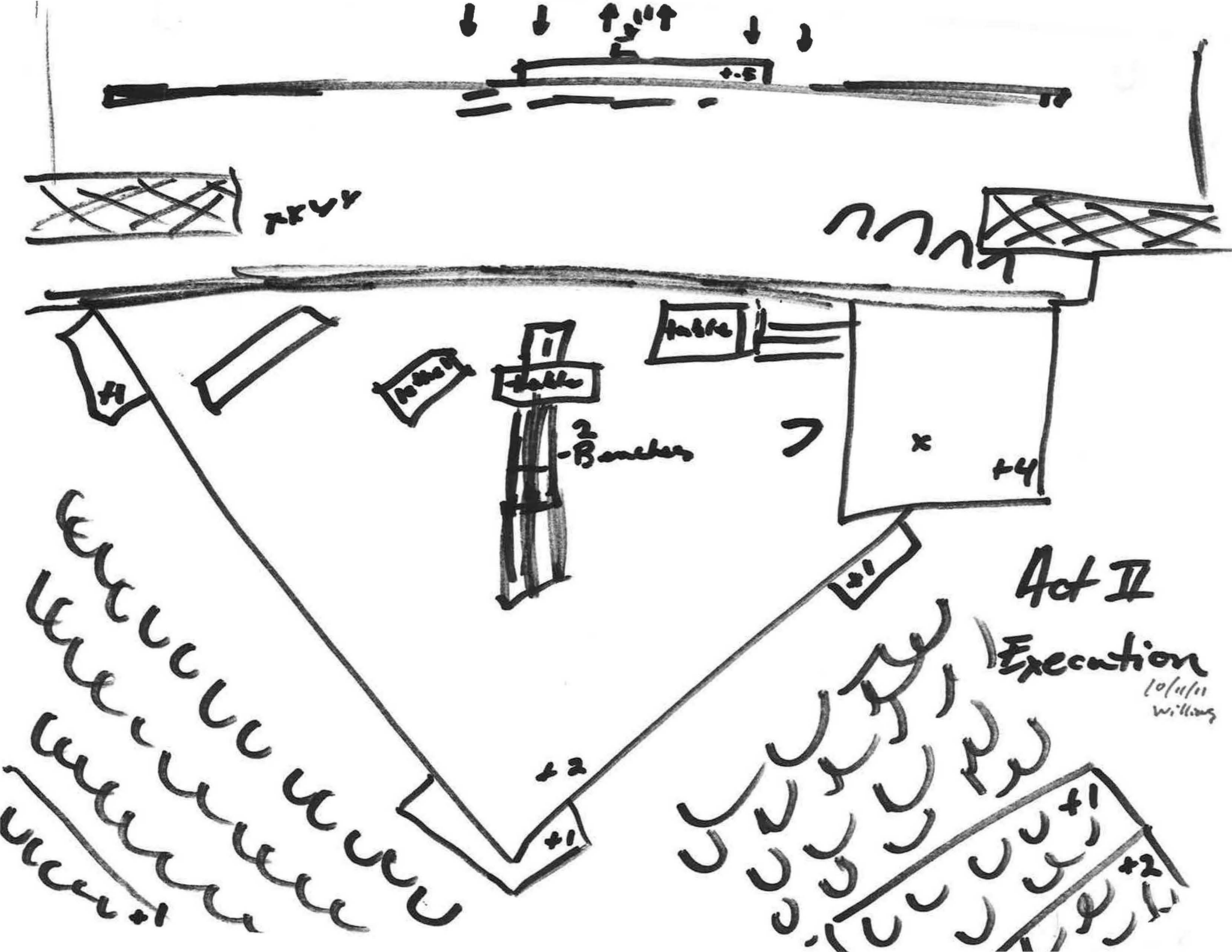


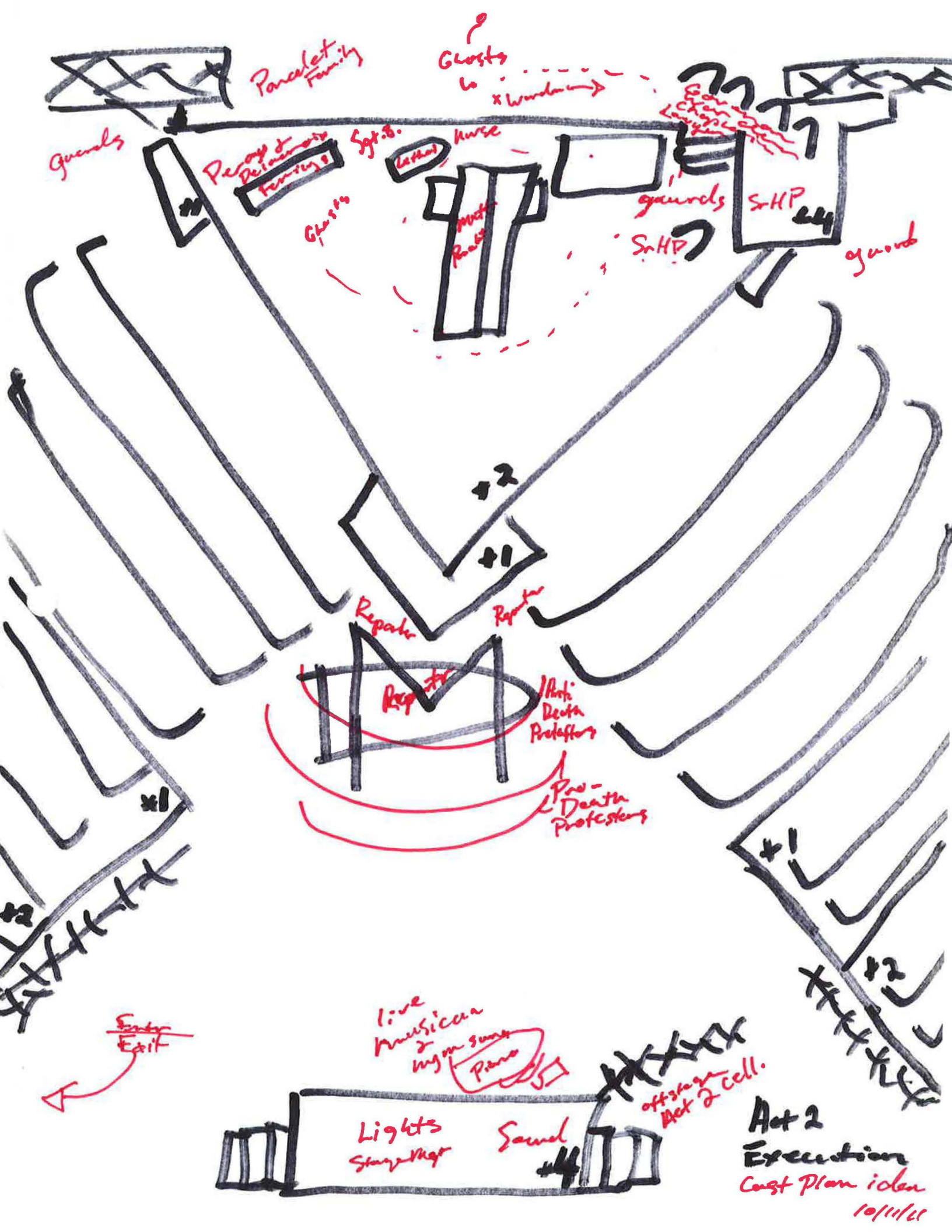
shadow work

→ Lethal cast
Introduce Governor & add
Pony/Delevariz

add protests
Everywhere!!!
Nuns & Press!

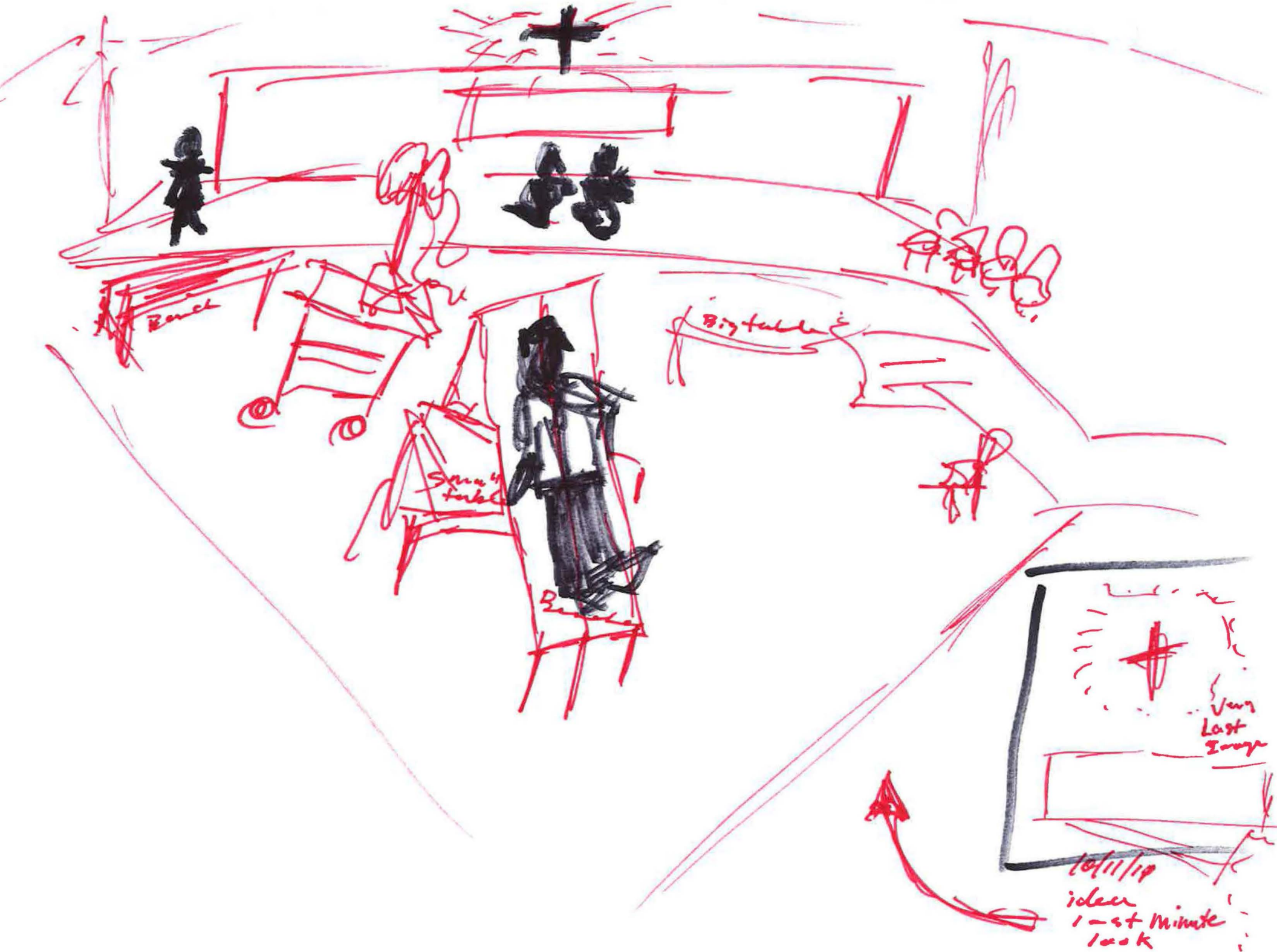
End Act I
10/11/11

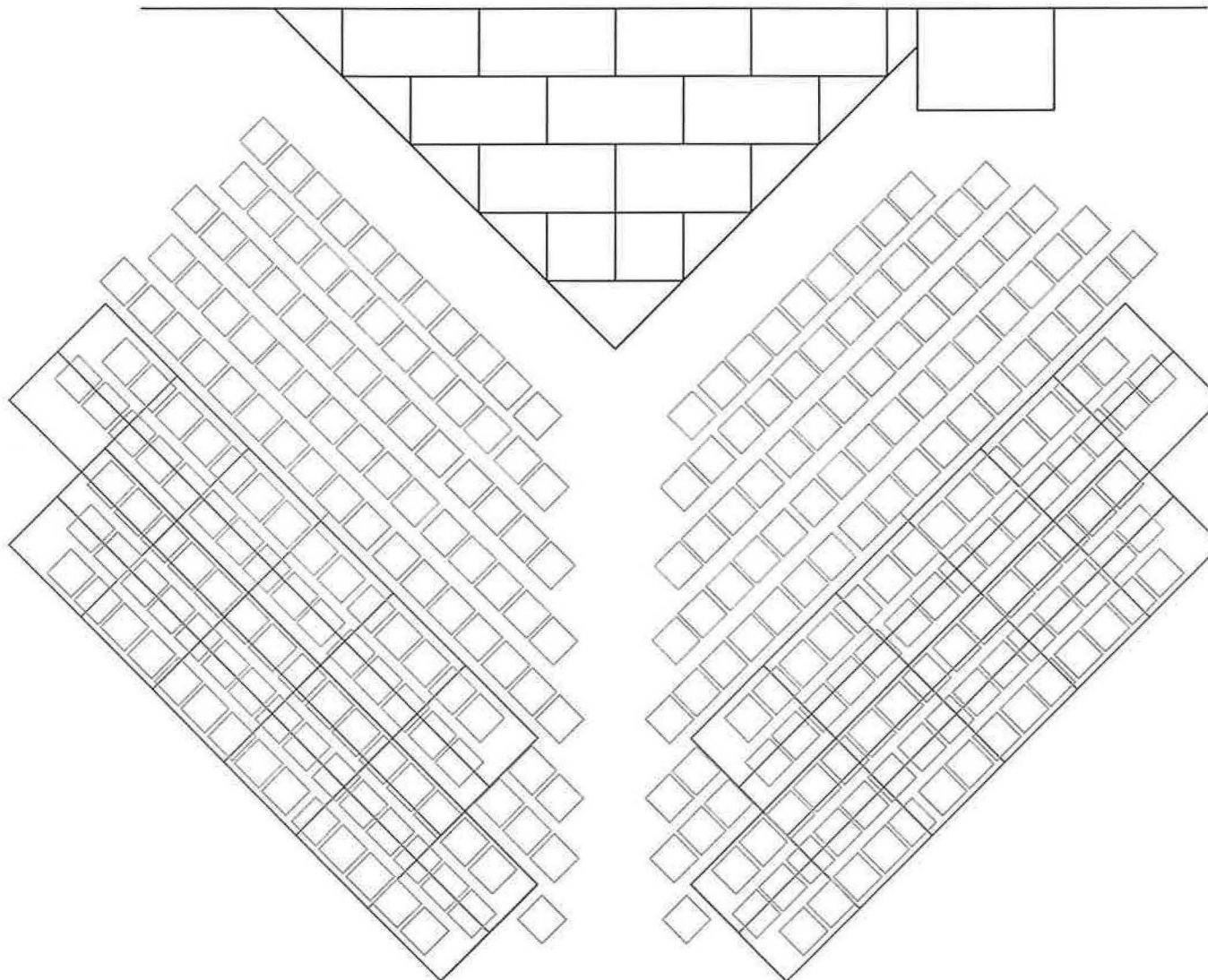






Interim
Act 2 look
10/11/14
Willing





mei

McNally Enterprises Inc.

By: Adrian Noack

Notes:

Show:

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2011 12:52 PM
To: 'Adrian Noack'
Subject: RE: Dead Man Quote


Thanks Adrian, the quote is ok.

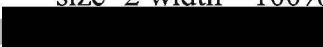
We need to discuss the audience seating arrangement. Your design shifts the seats so that many are near the center of the gym.
I'd prefer for them to go straight back from the front row.

Today I had my students set up 200 chairs on one side so that I could see if it worked. It ends up being 13 rows of 16 chairs each.

I took a picture of it and sent it to you through text message. If you need me to send the pics through email let me know.

Any chance you can drop in so that I explain my idea better?

Thanks,
Mr. Patrick Williams
Director of Performing Arts
Mater Dei High School


From: Adrian Noack 
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2011 4:52 PM
To: Williams, Patrick
Cc: Meg McNally
Subject: Dead Man Quote

Hey Patrick,

Here is the quote you asked for.

I have included a ground plan so you have something to reference.

Let me know if you have any questions.

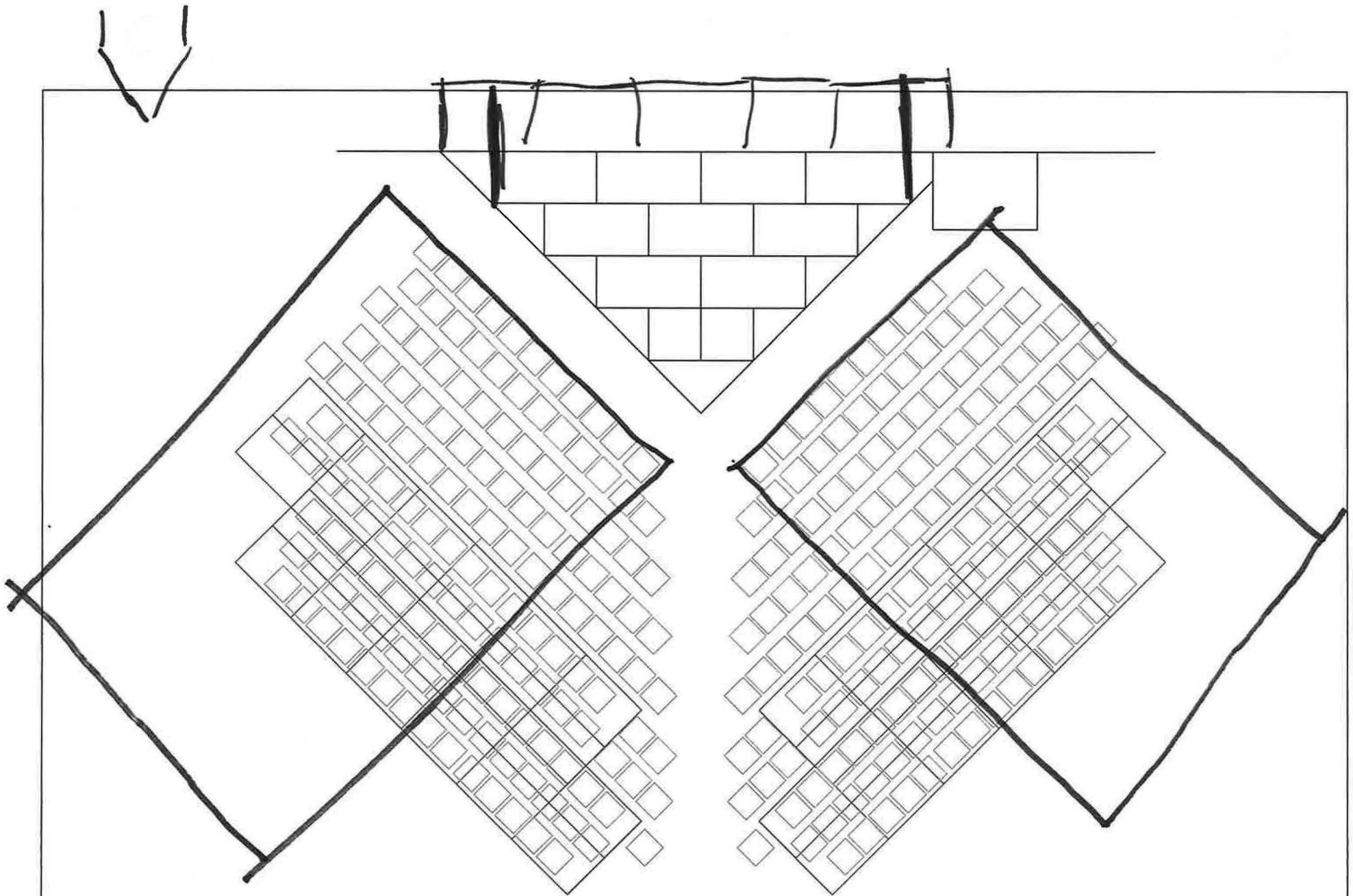
Thanks,

Adrian

--
Adrian Noack

VP Scenic and Special Projects

McNally Enterprises Inc.

mei

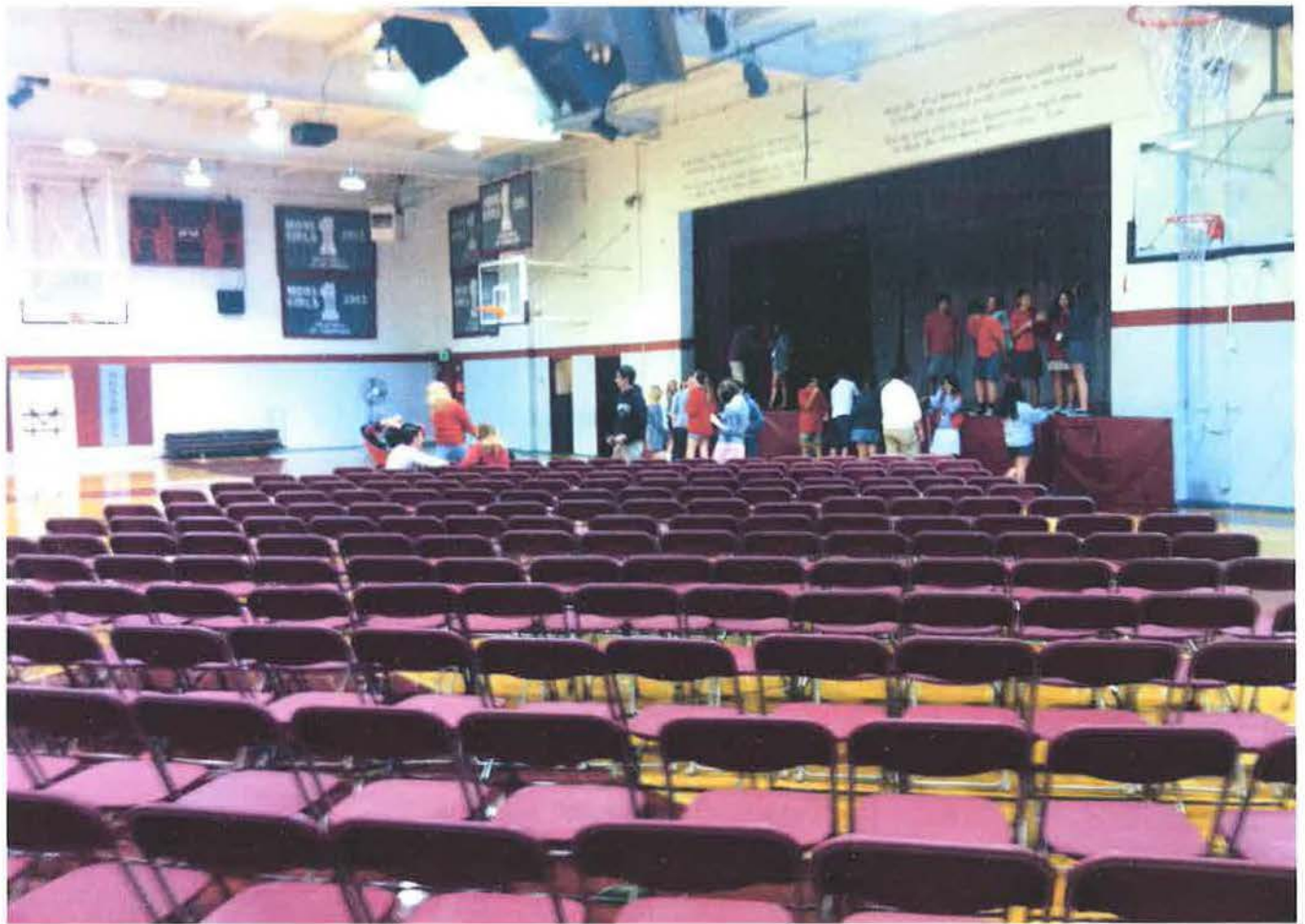
McNally Enterprises Inc.

By: Adrian Noack

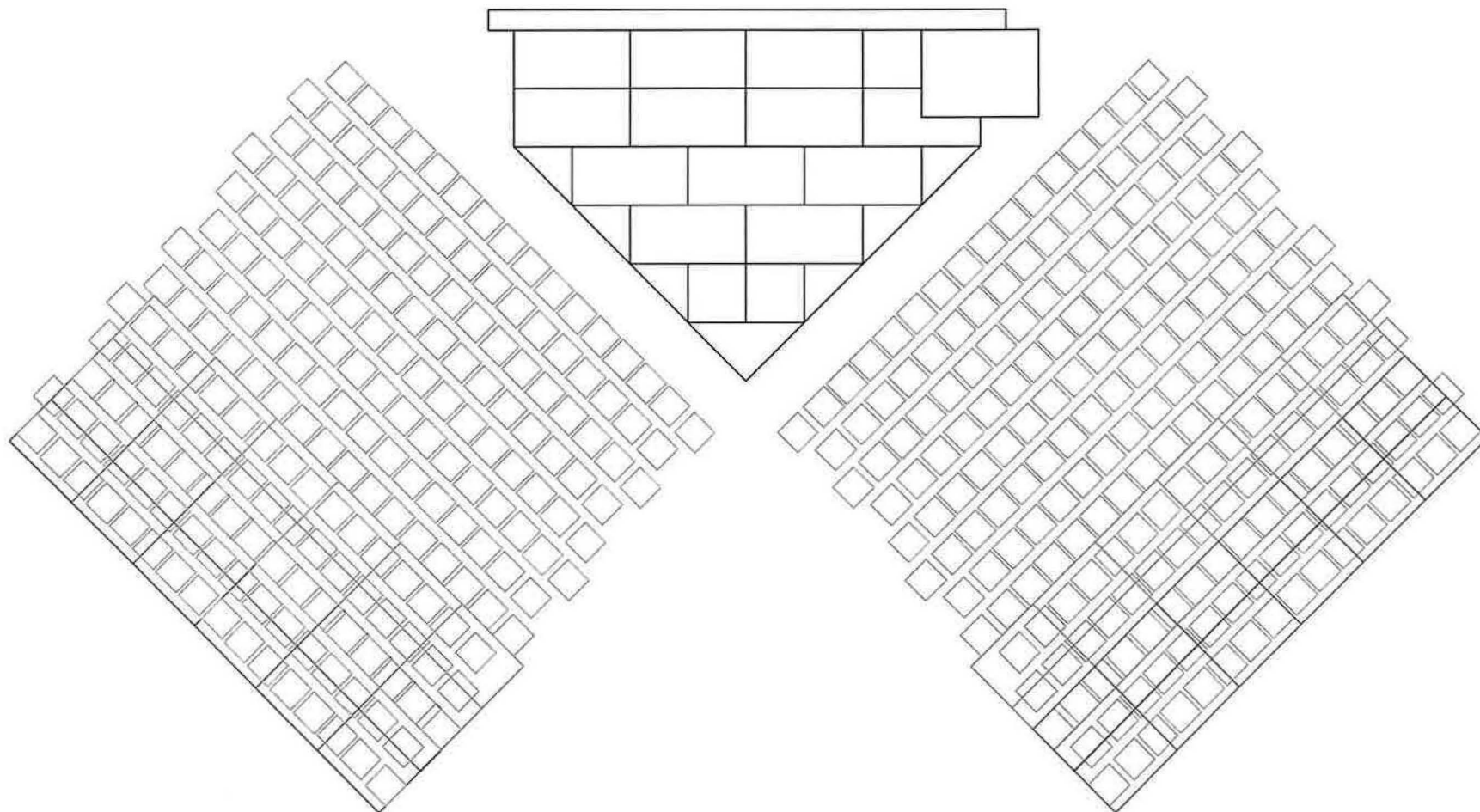
Notes:

Show:









mei

McNally Enterprises Inc.



By: Adrian Noack

Show:

Notes:

Williams, Patrick

From: Adrian Noack [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 28, 2011 3:04 PM
To: Williams, Patrick
Subject: Revised Quote and Layout
Attachments: Dead Man Walking W seating revis.pdf; Dead Man Quote 2.pdf

Hey Patrick

Here is the revised quote and layout.

The screen that were building, by virtue of what we have in the shop, going to be awesome.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Give me a call when you get a chance so I can walk you through the screen options.

Thanks,

Adrian

--

Adrian Noack

VP Scenic and Special Projects

McNally Enterprises Inc.





McNally Enterprises, Inc.

Job provided on NOV 1 11 For:
Patrick Williams
Mater DeiPhone:
Cell:
Email:Ext:
Fax:Quote By: Adrian Noack
Our Job #: RP - 12556-1
Job Status: Confirmed Order
Purchase Order:Ship Via:
Return Via:

Invoice To: Diocese of Orange

Job Site:
Room:
Address:

Terms: COD

Staging
Delivery Mon NOV 14 11
Set Up By:
Rehearsal
Show
Strike Wed NOV 23 11Contact: () -
Cell:() -**Description: Dead Man Walking****EQUIPMENT**

QTY	Description	Duration	Unit Price	Extended
Steeldeck				
1	Triangle Stage	1.00 Day(s)	1,700.00	1700.00
	Includes 14 4x8 Steeldeck			
	8 Triangle Pieces			
1	Seating Risers	1.00 Day(s)	2,000.00	2000.00
	Includes 48 4x6 Steeldeck seating risers			
<i>Steeldeck Subtotal:</i>				3,700.00
<i>Steeldeck Discount:</i>				(555.00)
Steeldeck Total:				\$ 3,145.00
Screen				
1	Rear Projection Screen	1.00 Day(s)	850.00	850.00
Screen Total:				\$ 850.00
<i>Equipment Subtotal:</i>				4,550.00
<i>Equipment Discount:</i>				(555.00)
Equipment Total:				\$ 3,995.00

LABOR

Date	Time	QTY	Personnel/Task	Duration	Unit Price	Extended
NOV 14 11						
		4	Staging Labor 1-Set up	6.00 Hours	48.00	1152.00
	00:00	4	Staging Labor 1-Strike	4.00 Hours	48.00	768.00
Labor Total:						\$ 1,920.00

Labor Rates: Hourly: up to 8.00 hours straight time, 1.5x 8.00-12.00 hours, 2.0x after 12.00 hours per day.
Labor Rates: Daily: up to 0.00 hours straight time, 1.5x 0.00-0.00 hours, 2.0x after 0.00 hours per day.**MISCELLANEOUS**

QTY	Description	Unit Price	Extended
1	C Trucking	150.00	150.00



McNally Enterprises, Inc.



Job provided on NOV 1 11 For:
Patrick Williams
Mater Dei



Phone:
Cell:
Email:

Ext:
Fax:

Description: Dead Man Walking
MISCELLANEOUS

QTY	Description	Unit Price	Extended
-----	-------------	------------	----------

Misc. Total: \$ 150.00

Job Grand Total: \$ 6,065.00



"OLD" GYM

Today's Date 11/05/11

MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL SET-UP REQUEST FORM - "OLD" GYM

Has event been approved by Administrative Board? ☒ YES ☐ NO

If no, please do not complete this form. Please forward a written request for EVENT APPROVAL to appropriate supervisor.

Requested by: Williams Moderator/School Representative Phone # (Ext. or Home) 798 P. Williams

Event: Project Discourse

Date: Nov 13 to 22

Set Up Time: Sunday 11/13 8:00am
Time of Event: To: Tuesday 11/22 11:00

Bleachers: ☐ YES ☒ NO

Trees/Carpet: ☐ YES ☒ NO

Podium: ☐ YES ☒ NO

Power Point Projector: ☒ YES ☐ NO

Screen: ☐ YES ☒ NO

VHS/DVD Projector: ☐ YES ☒ NO

Floor: ☐ YES ☒ NO

(If Food/Beverage is to be served, check Yes for Floor)

Microphone: ☐ YES ☒ NO

How Many? _____

Chairs: ☒ YES ☐ NO

How Many? 400 → actually need as of Nov 15 to Nov 2

Tables: ☒ YES ☐ NO

How Many? 3 → Piano in Gym Nov 13 to 22

Helium Tank: ☐ YES ☒ NO

Other: Garbage cans (10) Nov 16 to 22

(available in the Activities Office)

see Dr → Chain link Fences inside Nov 14 to 2

RETURN TO PERFORMING ARTS OFFICE FOR APPROVAL - PERFORMING ARTS SECRETARY

☒ Approved ☐ Not Approved

Patrick Williams, Performing Arts Director

Reason: _____

Copies/Approved Request:

☒ Recorded in Calendar
☒ Copies Distributed

☒ Moderator/School Representative
☒ Julie Barnett, Facilities Coordinator
☒ Sodexo Food Services
☒ Stephen Ritter, Facilities Director
☒ Larry Sharp, MDTV Director
☒ John Denny, Security Director

USE BACK OF SHEET FOR DIAGRAM FOR SPECIFIC SET-UP

Please note:

This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.

STAGE

Fence

Bleachers in

carpet

McNally Enterprises Inc.

Notes:

Williams, Patrick

From: Robert W Conrad [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2011 9:03 PM
To: Williams, Patrick
Subject: RE: Dead Man Walking sound/lights
Attachments: INVOICE Mater Dei Deadman Walking.doc

Patrick,

Attached is the invoice for the show. I put on the invoice that I would be loading in on Monday morning but my goal is to be there Sunday after noon after Mei is done or most of the way done. If you have any questions or issues feel free to call me.. also if you can send me the layout

Thank you,

Robert

From: Williams, Patrick [mailto:pwilliams@materdei.org]
Sent: Tuesday, September 06, 2011 11:00 AM
To: Robert W Conrad
Subject: Dead Man Walking sound/lights

Robert,

Thanks for contacting me.

I do need your help with sound on our next production. I may need your help with some lighting instruments too.

Show: *Dead Man Walking* by Tim Robbins
 Load-in: Sunday 11/13
 Dress Rehearsals: 11/14, 11/15 & 11/17
 Abridged Day-time performances: Nov 16, 17, 21 & 22 (two 80 minute shows each day)
 Full show Night-time performances: Nov 18, 19 & 22

We have over 30 speaking parts, a couple could use wired mics (narrator, Governor, reporters), but most cast members will need wireless lavs.

There will be some live instruments (guitars, possible piano), but we don't know the specifics yet.

The show is in the old gym (Monarch Pavilion), but this time we are using the stage and area just in front of it. The audience will be on risers and divided into two sections.

There is a dance showcase in the space on 11/12. Our MDTV teacher Larry Sharp is hanging the lights for the dance showcase and programming channels onto a light board. Usually we use the same board and lights for our show the following week.

I anticipate needing your help with some more instruments and hanging/focusing the plot and programming some cues.

Please let me know your availability and fee for Dead Man Walking.

In other news, we are down a theatre teacher due to low enrollment. We have a choir teacher in the Theatre Arts 1 classroom. I am interested in developing some tech classes with you so that those students still get a well rounded introduction to theatre. Please think about if you were to teach four intro to tech class periods, what would they be?

Thanks,
Mr. Patrick Williams

5/19/2012

INVOICE

Date: May 19, 2012
Invoice #

Conrad Electrical Services

To

P Williams

Ship To

P Williams

Mater Del High School

Mater Del High School

UNITED STATES

Salesperson	Job	Payment Terms	Due Date
Robert Warren Conrad	Dead Man Walking	upon completion	11/22/11

Description	Qty.	Unit Price	Line Total
Setup Equipment for sound starting at 8:00am on Monday November 14th	1	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Sound system for use at mater del high school.	1	\$1,300.00	\$1,300.00
Wireless mic transmitter and receiver.	10	\$50.00	\$500.00
Provide one Technician to operate sound system.	1	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00
Break Down of equipment after show on Tuesday November 22nd	1	\$0.00	\$0.00 T
Subtotal			\$4,500.00
Sales Tax			\$0.00
Total			\$4,500.00

FOR ALL YOUR ELECTRICAL NEEDS

Make all checks payable to Conrad Electrical Services

Thank you for your business!

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Monday, November 07, 2011 2:44 PM
To: 'Robert Conrad'
Subject: RE: Dead Man Walking at MDHS

Robert,

See you then, thanks.

Mr. Patrick Williams
Director of Performing Arts
Mater Dei High School

[REDACTED]

size=2 width="100%" align=center tabindex=-1>

From: Robert Conrad [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 07, 2011 1:08 PM
To: Williams, Patrick
Subject: RE: Dead Man Walking at MDHS

Patrick,

I had planned on setting up Sunday evening as I am dropping my daughter off at the airport in the morning then will be loading and heading out there. I have plenty to do that will avoid the stage area but will need some time on and over the stage.

Thank you and see you Sunday

Robert

From: Williams, Patrick [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 03, 2011 2:21 PM
To: Robert W Conrad; Robert Conrad
Subject: Dead Man Walking at MDHS

Robert,

I've sent your invoice up to our business office to start the long check cutting process. Attached is the cast schedule for November and the seating diagram for the play.

MEI is loading the stage and seating area from 8:00am to 2:00pm on Sunday Nov 13. The cast will come in after that to begin the tech process.

I have cleared the gym calendars so that it is empty during the school day on Mon Nov 14 & Tues Nov 15. Let me know if you think you'll set-up on Sun or Mon. I'd like to have most of the mics and cues up running for the Monday Nov 14 dress rehearsal.

Thank you,
Mr. Patrick Williams
Director of Performing Arts
Mater Dei High School

[REDACTED]

Have you seen the Mane Message?

A blog for some things you might not know about Mater Dei...

Visit Mane Message Here: <http://manemessage.materdei.org/>

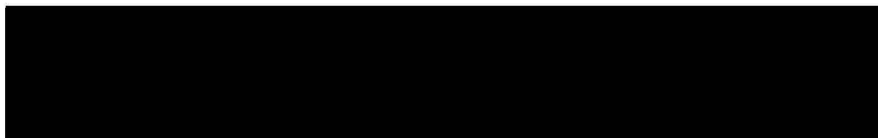
5/18/2012

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2011 9:58 AM
To: Sharp, Larry
Subject: Fwd: Dead Man Walking Song
Attachments: Dead Man Walking.m4a; ATT676433.htm

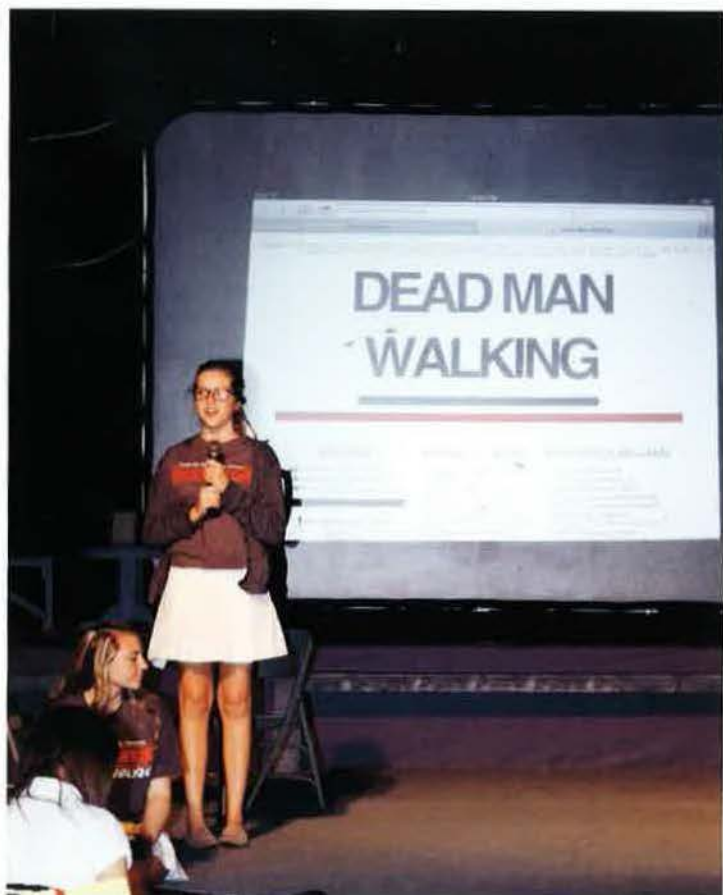
Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:



Dear Mr. Williams,
Hello. This is my dream sequence song that I believe should be played on pages 34-35 in the script. Glad you enjoyed the song. I also sent it to my iTunes, but I got lost after that.....

THANKS!
- Caitlan Guillen (Theatre 2)



Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Thursday, November 03, 2011 11:47 AM
To: Sharp, Larry
Cc: Dormitorio, Mark
Subject: Dead Man Wlaking stage design
Attachments: Dead Man Walking W seating revis.pdf; DMW schedule draft 4.doc


Larry,

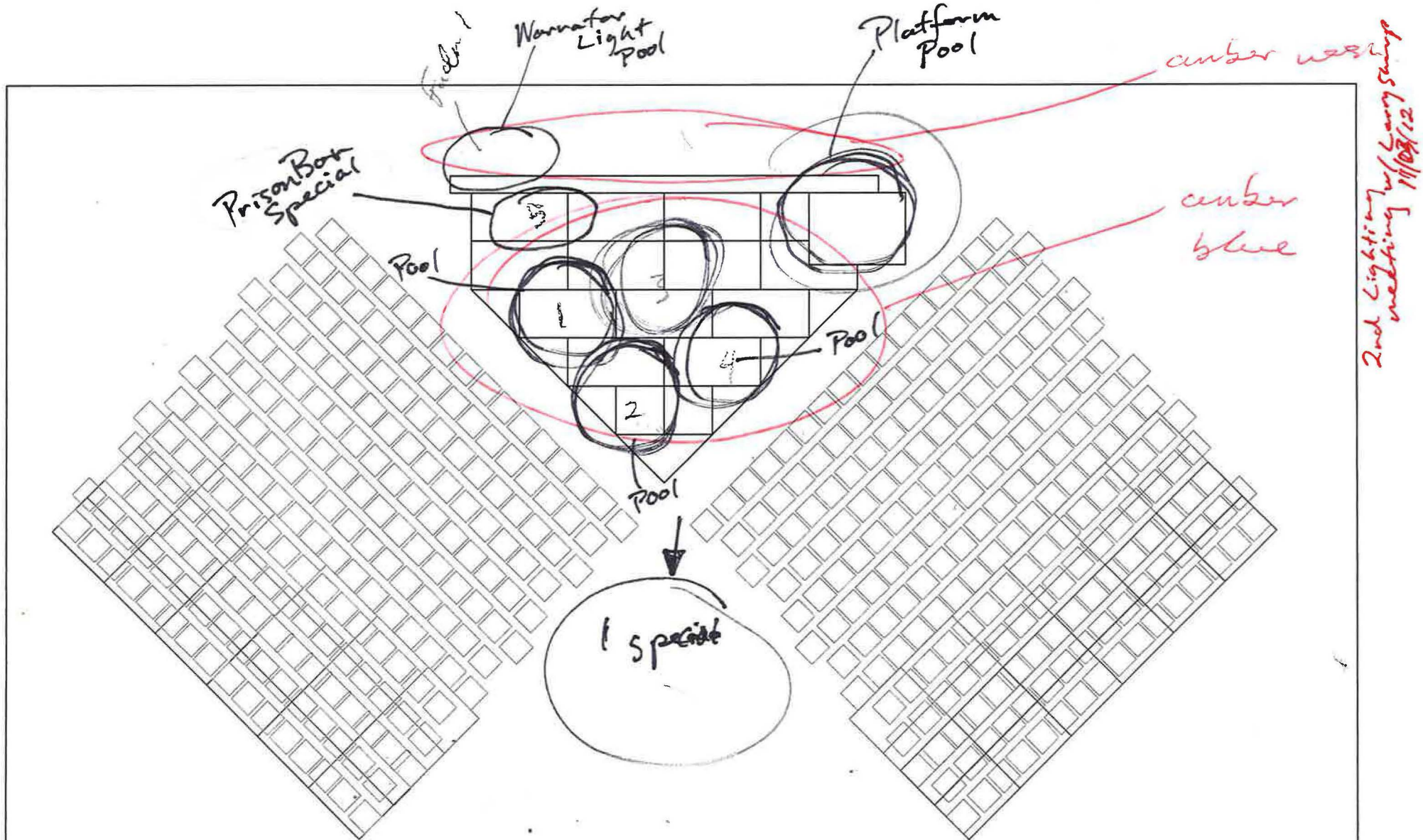
Attached is the latest stage design from MEI.
I have taped it out (actual size) in Monarch Pavilion.

Let's meet up sometime today or tomorrow to discuss where the pools of light need to shine based on the ground plan.

BTW – I'd like to add a special with a gobo of prison bars. We'll talk.

Thanks,
Mr. Patrick Williams
Director of Performing Arts
Monarch High School





mei

McNally Enterprises Inc.

By: Adrian Noack

Notes:

Show:

POOLS & SPECIALS

Williams, Patrick

From: Sharp, Larry
Sent: Sunday, November 13, 2011 1:29 PM
To: Williams, Patrick
Subject: RE: Lights (expanded)

Hi Patrick,

I'm very sorry that everything is not ready for you today. I will have to help you with things tomorrow to get bugs worked out and get fixtures focused.

We ran into several problems. First, Ryan was unavailable to help me with anything this year and so I had to do it myself. There were too many events, too close together, that required my direct involvement rather than just my supervision. The theatrical lighting in the MAC was in dire need of servicing and there were no other reasonable or available means to service them than myself. Volleyball got a first round home game Tuesday and so we shot it because we probably couldn't fit any other games into the schedule. The lift was picked up on Tuesday, one of the days that I could have worked on lights. Because of the blood drive, we couldn't get the lift back in till Thursday morning. Most of our lighting instruments apparently don't work well, have been removed, and/or are very dirty. Several teachers informed me that they were having issues with their classroom systems and so I had to break away to work on those.

I decided that your main instruments for the pools and washes would be the moving lights I had removed from the MAC for servicing. The movers can't be controlled by the conventional board but need to use the computer. I will need to work with you to train how to use the lighting computer for the movers.

Last night, we had a power surge/failure shortly before curtain that caused fuses to blow in one of the moving lights, lost channels in the very old dimers, and corrupted the light board memory. I was able to recover the light board to factory defaults and then we delayed while we attempted to rebuild scenes for the show. The show was saved. I tried to get fuses for the mover at 9:20 pm so it would be ready for today but Home Depot closed at 9pm. I'll get fuses installed tomorrow.

Chris and I worked till midnight to get everything from Dance struck save for what you were going to need and we were both too exhausted to continue. While I was at school all day yesterday, I promised my kids, who were home alone and who I had barely seen over the last couple of weeks, that I was going to stay home with them today.

I realized when I got home at 0100 that I hadn't left the projector out for you. It is on a cart located in the LeVecke Electrical room.

With my department spread so thinly, things just go downhill quickly when things get out of balance.

I'm very sorry that I can't be there to help you today and I hope you'll forgive me. I might be able to have Chris come over this afternoon and help with some things. I think he had to drive to Bakersfield this am for his other job. He is not near as accomplished as Ryan though and he does require detailed guidance.

Call my cell and I'll see if I can talk you through troubleshooting to get the light board functional.

-Larry

Larry Sharp
Director,



MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

PRESENTS PROJECT: DISCOURSE

DEAD MAN WALKING

INTM ROBBINS

NOV. 18, 19 & 22, 2011
AT 7:30PM IN MONARCH PAVILION

MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

PRESENTS PROJECT: DISCOURSE

DEAD MAN WALKING

INTM ROBBINS

NOV. 18, 19 & 22, 2011
AT 7:30PM IN MONARCH PAVILION

MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

PRESENTS PROJECT: DISCOURSE

DEAD MAN WALKING

INTM ROBBINS

NOV. 18, 19 & 22, 2011
AT 7:30PM IN MONARCH PAVILION

Mater Dei High School

PROJECT: DISCOURSE

THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT

**DEAD MAN
WALKING**

BY TIM ROBBINS

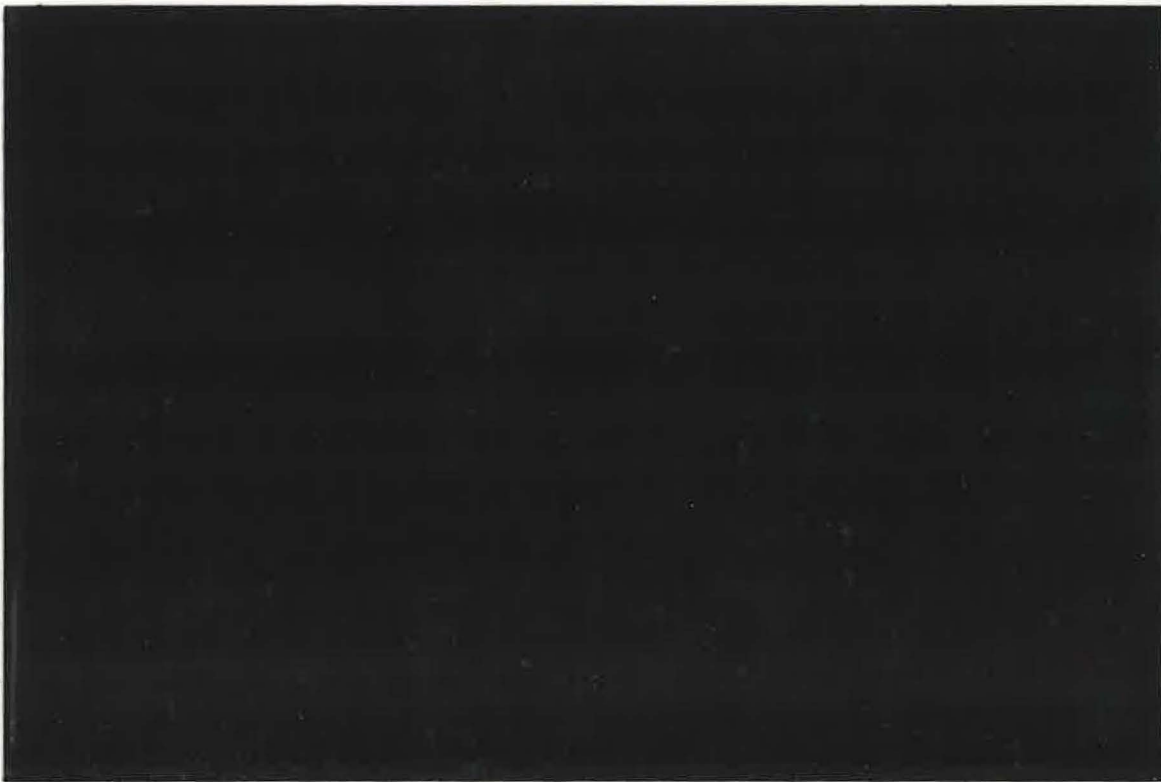
BASED ON THE BOOK

BY SR. HELEN PREJEAN

NOV. 18, 19 & 22

TICKETS AT SHOW \$15.00

materdei.org/theatre



VIDEO GALLERY

Project: Discourse Presents Dead Man Walking

Added 7 months ago • [Share this video](#)



Project: Discourse 2011

Don't miss this upcoming performance from the MD Theatre Department.

Listed in [Theatre Arts/Theatre Arts Productions](#)

Watch in **HD**

A CD-ROM disc is centered on a white background. The disc is white with a clear center hole. The text "DEAD MAN WALKING" is printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font at the top. The text "Commercials" is printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font at the bottom.

DEAD MAN WALKING

Commercials

Dead Man Walking

Project Discourse: 2011

By **KATIE GATIAN**

assistant editor

Following thought-provoking shows including *The Diary of Anne Frank* (2009) and *Skin of Our Teeth* (2010) -- of years past, Project: Discourse 2011, *Dead Man Walking*, is sure to ignite powerful discussion and touch the hearts and minds of all.

Based on her novel, **Tim Robbins'** play focuses on **Sister Helen Prejean** as she delves into a battle of morals. The powerful drama illustrates both sides of the capital punishment case of **Matt Poncelet**, with **Sister Helen** as his spiritual counselor during his time on Death Row.

"This play is about dignity. This play is about sacrifice. This play is about devotion," said **Williams**, "I hope through classroom participation, the campus will begin a dialogue about human rights and the power of redemption."

In preparing for a show that brings up the controversial issue of the death penalty, Performing Arts Director **Mr. Patrick Williams** "is using a brand-new rehearsal technique that involves a ton of reflection to allow actors and actresses to completely understand their characters," said junior **Casey Brecher**, who plays the rough and tough convict, **Poncelet**.

"We focus more on the emotion and the concepts of the play and characters. Through

the emotions, the blocking and memorizing the lines come to us naturally," adds senior **Joanna Cornejo**, who portrays one of two **Sister Helens** in the show. A creative choice unique to this MD production is the casting of two Mater Dei actresses to play **Sister Helen** as opposed to the traditional one actress.

Williams explains, "One actress is the narrator and the other actress is in the scenes. This allows the audience to hear and see the story of **Sister Helen's** life as told by [senior] **Bryana Corza**, and as portrayed in 1984 by **Joanna Cornejo**."

Cornejo adds, "One **Sister Helen** is reflecting upon the actions that are taking place, and the other is living the actions with all the other characters." This original spin should provide for a fresh and dynamic look on the story that's bound to keep the audience on its toes.

Backing up the leads are a talented supporting cast and ensemble. Seniors **Alexa Vellanoweth** and **Matt Panceo** play **Sister Colleen**, best friend and confidante to **Sister Helen**, and prison chaplain, respectively. Seniors **Matt Dallal** and **Veronica Valencia** bring in the raw emotions of a murder case to life as the parents of **Poncelet's** young victims. Adding a perspective that is commonly overlooked in a case involving capital punishment is senior **Jackie Janowicz** as **Lucielle Poncelet**, **Matt's** mother. Please see **DEAD MAN WALKING**, page

Scarlet Scroll

Mater Dei High School

Volume: XV

Number: III

November 2011

Circulation: ∞

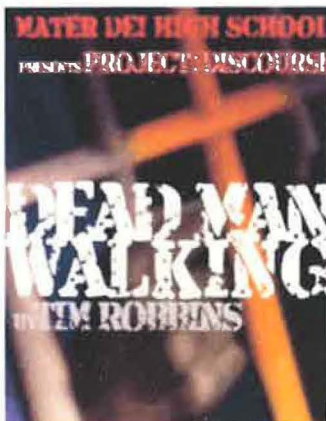
Santa Ana, CA

of November 1st-6th as the national site of the First Tie-Dye Cupcake Coalition,

education in Nepal. Last spring, they raised money to start the first girls' soccer

have already sent over 130 girls to school. "I hope we can empower even more

humanitarian journalist of *The New York Times* and co-author of *Half the Sky*.



**Nov. 18, 19 & 22,
2011
at 7:30 in the
Monarch Pavilion**

Mater Dei vs. Servite Football Recap **Game of our Lives**

By JAZMINE SANTAYANA

editor-in-chief

The biggest high school rivalry in the nation: the Mater Dei Monarchs (ranked ninth) versus the Servite Friars (ranked first) for the game of Mater Dei's life. It was perhaps one of the most intense games in the history of Mater Dei: the Mater Dei fans were screaming and pumped, down to the last two seconds of the last quarter.

The Friars wasted no time, and scored a touchdown within the first quarter, but our Monarchs fought back and got a touchdown with less than two minutes left in the first quarter. By halftime, the Friars were leading, 14-6.

The tables turned during the third quarter, when the Monarchs took the Friars by surprise by pulling ahead and scoring two touchdowns in a row, bringing the score to 21-14. The Friars struck back and scored three consecutive touchdowns, going ahead 35-21.

The Monarchs football team would need two touchdowns during the fourth

quarter in order to win. During the fourth quarter, our quarterback, **Ryan McMahon**, threw the ball to **Thomas Duarte** with 4:53 left on the clock, bringing the Monarchs to 35-28, but we still had one more touchdown to go before we could hopefully tie the score and go into overtime.

The last play was filled with intensity. There was 14 seconds left on the clock before the last quarter was over, and the Monarchs had over twenty yards to run in order to get a touchdown. Everyone took their places, and the last play of the night was set into motion. The clock started counting down--the crowd was shouting and cheering, trying to encourage the team. With two seconds left on the clock, our quarterback threw the ball to the end zone into the arms of a waiting player, closely guarded by two Friars. The Monarchs went wild but because of the two Friars heavily guarding our



sole player, our Monarch fumbled the ball.

Our team fought hard against the Friars, but unfortunately we lost by a touchdown, with a final score of 35-28. It was a great game. The fans of the Monarchs did not leave disappointed with the loss to our long-time rival. Everyone said it was a great game, and that our boys tried our hardest and in the end, that's all everyone can really ask for. Maybe next year.

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick

Sent: Wednesday, November 09, 2011 1:09 PM

To: * All Users / Mater Dei

Subject: Discourse T-shirts \$5

On **Monday** Nov 14 and **Tuesday** Nov 15, we will have **Project: Discourse t-shirts and jeans** days.

If you would like a t-shirt, they are available in the Performing Arts Office for \$5.00


You can also reply to this email, put the size you need, and then I can leave it in your mailbox tomorrow.

Thank you,

Mr. Patrick Williams

Director of Performing Arts

Mater Dei High School



MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTS

PROJECT: DISCOURSE

MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTS

PROJECT: DISCOURSE

DEAD MAN WALKING

Back



Colors Inc. Screenprinting

Invoice

Date	Invoice #
10/31/2011	10029

Bill To
Mater Dei

Ship To
PROJECT DISCOURSE

JOB NAME	PROJECT DISCOURSE
-----------------	-------------------

P.O. Number	Terms	Rep	Ship	Via	F.O.B.	Project
	Due on receipt		10/31/2011		Santa Ana	

Item Code	Quantity	Description	Price Each	Amount
Tee's	128	Gildan G200 Dark Gray shirts with 2 color front with flash and 1 color back with flash	7.00	896.00T
ReSet-up	3	Clean and Re-setup Screens	10.00	30.00
		Sales Tax	8.75%	78.40

Total	\$1,004.40
--------------	------------

Pay online at: <https://ipn.intuit.com/q395j5cx>

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2011 1:18 PM
To: Kelly, Kathleen; George, Anna-Lisa
Subject: Descript of Project: Discourse

Our annual cross-curricular theme-based learning event, **Project: Discourse** is next week. From November 16 through the 22nd, English classes will attend **Project: Discourse Forums** and the Religion classes will have guest speakers who will address dignity, compassion, capitol punishment and other issues pertaining to the play **Dead Man Walking**. The play is based on the novel by Sister Helen Prejean. The full length version of the play will perform at 7:30pm on November 18, 19 and 22nd in the Monarch Pavilion. Tickets can be purchased though the Performing Arts Office.

When speaking this, Sister Helen **Prejean** is pronounced "**PRAY-Jon**".

Mr. Patrick Williams
 Director of Performing Arts
 Mater Dei High School

<hr size=2 width="100%" align=center tabindex=-1>

From: Coe, Pamela
Sent: Tuesday, November 01, 2011 8:32 AM
To: Williams, Patrick
Subject: RE: Call for Connect-ED Announcements

Yes, that would be helpful. Highlight the key elements and the dates/times parents can attend, cost, etc.

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Tuesday, November 01, 2011 8:32 AM
To: Coe, Pamela
Subject: RE: Call for Connect-ED Announcements

For the Nov 7th, Do you need me to write a brief description about Project Discourse for you?

Mr. Patrick Williams
 Director of Performing Arts
 Mater Dei High School

<hr size=2 width="100%" align=center tabindex=-1>

From: Coe, Pamela
Sent: Monday, October 31, 2011 9:08 AM
To: Aceves, Jennifer; Bauer, Kellie; Bellomo, Phil; Bergeron, Allison; Colon, Marissa; Corona, Maria; Craft, Melinda; Denny, John; Duffy, Sue; Fernandez, Mike; Gutierrez, Anjel; Hart, Kendra; Henderson, Jake; Hickman, Kevin; Hopkins, Stephanie; Hornbuckle, Jennifer; Immel, Kathleen; Katnic, Tanya; Kelly, Kathleen; Lyons, Sandy; Melvin, Scott; Merriweather, Jill; Milby, Gail; Murray, Kathy; Neustadt, Diana; O'Hara, Tim; Pena, Vanessa; Pescetti, Karen; Plunkett, Tom; Ringo, Joy; Rosales, Lisa; Slate, Vicki; Smith, Sean; Steinbaugh, Kathy; Steves, Helen; Taylor, David; Tufo, Jonathan; Walsh, Tana; Webb, Laura; Welsh-Treglia, Anne; Williams, Patrick; Wilson, Catherine; Zamora, Griselda; Adams, Erica
Subject: Call for Connect-ED Announcements

A Connect-ED message will be going out today regarding the week's schedule, Mass dress and other general announcements. Let me know by noon if you have a request to include an announcement in today's message (if you have not already done so). If there are too many announcements, please note

that some may be bumped for more time sensitive announcements. Also there may be a delay in distributing the message if something more urgent comes up.

If you have requests for an additional message that does not appear on the list below, please let me know. Keep in mind that Connect-ED messages are intended for parents.

Thank you,
Pam

Upcoming Connect-ED Messages

- October 31 – November General Announcements
- November 7 – National Signing Day / Project Discourse
- November 14 – Thanksgiving Outreach / November General Announcements (as needed)
- November 22 – Thanksgiving Message
- November 28 – Madrigal Feast
- November 30 – December General Announcements

Thanks,
Pam

Pamela Coe
Director of Grants & Media Relations
Mater Dei High School

A tradition of excellence since 1950

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2011 6:40 PM
To: Katnic, Tanya; Ryan, Nancy; George, Anna-Lisa; Duffy, Sue; Upham, Dorinda; Carrillo, Melanie; Sharp, Larry; Dormitorio, Mark; Peterson, Karin; Coe, Pamela; Bergeron, Allison; Colon, Marissa; Kelly, Kathleen; Jacobson, Melissa; Diulio, Jeff; Francis, Lewis; Neustadt, Diana; Ramirez, Emilia; Zamora, Griselda
Subject: DMW Logos and graphics
Attachments: Project Discourse Letterhead.pdf; dead man walking post front.pdf; dead man walking post front.jpg; Project Discourse Logo.jpg



Project Discourse
Letterhead.p...



dead man walking
post front.pd...



dead man walking
post front.jp...



Project Discourse
Logo.jpg (19...

Attached are Project: Discourse graphics designed by Catherine Wilson and her design students.

Please use these images for advertising our event or include on documents in class, screens, bulletins, etc.

Thank you,
Mr. Patrick Williams
Director of Performing Arts
Mater Dei High School
[REDACTED]



MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

The Lumen



"shining the light on coming events"

November 2011

Parent Newsletter

Vol. XXVII, No. 3

Hollywood Knights

Presents

The MDHS Faculty vs.
Celebrity Team Basketball Game
consisting of TV & film stars

**Saturday, Nov. 5 at 6 p.m. in the
Meruelo Athletic Center**

Tickets are \$8 presale & \$10 at the door,
all are welcome!

For more information visit:
www.hollywoodknights.com/2011MarkMaterDeiHigh.php



PROCEEDS WILL
BENEFIT MDHS'
GIRLS BASKETBALL

CHRISTMAS AT THE CORNER



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2011
5:00 p.m. in the MD Grotto
Admission is free

Performances by all MD
Performing Arts programs
Live Nativity Scene - Christmas Carols
Strolling Dickens Carolers - Holiday
Boutique - Cookie Bar - Hot Cocoa
Toy Drive - Benefitting Monarchs 4 Marines.
Please bring new unwrapped toys.

For more information contact Karen Pescetti
in Mater Dei's Performing Arts Department at
(714) 957-3784 or kpescetti@materdei.org.
www.materdei.org/christmas

GUIDANCE COLUMN

DATES TO REMEMBER

Nov. 2	CSF meeting at 7:30 a.m. in the LeVecke Center
Nov. 4	Deadline date to register for the Dec. 10 ACT Test. Register at www.actstudent.org .
Nov. 5	SAT Reasoning and the SAT Tests at 8:00 - 1:00 p.m. at MDHS. SAT Subject Language Tests with Listening are available at the November Test Date ONLY in the following languages: Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, & Spanish.
Nov. 8	Deadline date to register for Dec. 3 SAT Reasoning & SAT Subject Tests. Register at www.collegeboard.com MDHS Code: 053-240.
Nov. 15	Sophomore Student/Parent Night at 7:00 p.m. in the LeVecke Center
Nov. 30	AP Exam Fee Deadline: Students enrolled in an AP class must pay \$95 toward each AP class exam taken in May of 2012. Payments must be made through your FACTS. For questions, please e-mail Mrs. Bauer at kbauer@materdei.org .
Dec. 3	SAT Reasoning and the SAT Subject Tests at 8:00 - 1:00 p.m. at MDHS.
Dec. 10	ACT Assessment Plus Writing at 8:00 - 1:00 p.m. at MDHS. Register at www.actstudent.org .

The Common Application: This application is used by hundreds of colleges and universities, even Harvard accepts it! You can access the common application at www.commonapp.org.

Applications for California Public Universities: The 23 California State Universities (CSUs), including Long Beach, San Diego, Fullerton, and San Luis Obispo, request that all seniors apply online at www.csumentor.edu, Oct. 1 - Nov. 30.

MATER DEI THEATRE ARTS EVENTS

SCHOOL PLAY

3rd Annual Project Discourse 2011

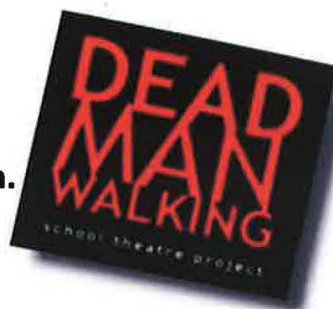
Dead Man Walking by Tim Robbins

Performances Nov. 18, 19, 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Monarch Pavilion

Pre-sale: Students \$10 & Adults \$15

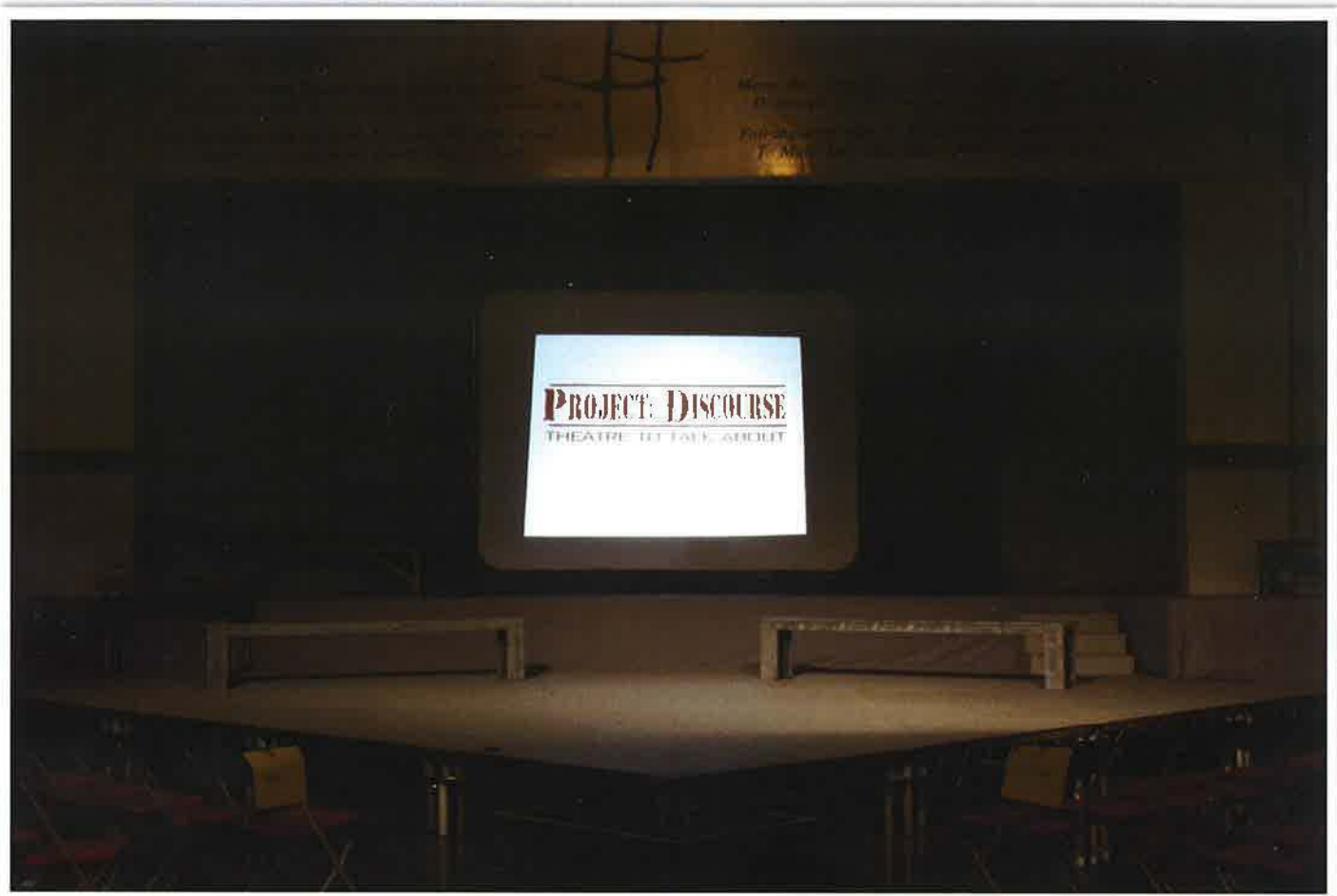
All tickets at the door: \$15



Dead Man Walking by Tim Robbins is based on the autobiography by Sister Helen Prejean. The MD Theatre Department has selected a cast that consists of over 50 MD students for the production. All MD students will attend a presentation of scenes during the school day and will be discussing/learning topics from the show in their classes. The Religion department will be featuring in-class guest speakers who will further discuss the topics that are brought up in the play. For more information on the DMW School Theatre Project visit: <http://dmwplay.org>. For information on Mater Dei's Theatre Department, visit www.materdei.org/theatre.

Read a student blog on Project Discourse at: projectdiscourse.tumblr.com

Mater Dei High School in the Diocese of Orange, mindful of its mission to be witness to the love of Christ for all, believes every person, as a child of God, regardless of race, condition, or age, has equal dignity and an inalienable right to an education. Therefore, no qualified student will be denied admission to this school on the basis of sex, race, color, or national origin.



MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

PRESENTS PROJECT. DISCOURSE

DEAD MAN WALKING

by TIM ROBBINS

NOV. 18, 19 & 22, 2011
at 7:30PM in MONARCH PAVILION

Dead Man Walking

Callback list for Wednesday 8/31/11

2:40 to 3:00 – Matt Y. – *Walter*

Kaylee M. *Alize*

Megan L.

Ashley R. – *journalist*

Joey B. – *mitch*

Sean S. *Jim or Tray*

Phillip V.

3:00 to 6:00 – Abby R.

63/64 *2* 63/64 Kendra H *B*

2 – 36 – Molly B *A*

1 – 7.58 – Veronica V *B*

1 – 58 – Emma F *A*

2 58 – Sabrina N *B*

2 ~~63/64~~ Caitlin G. *A*

1 – 7.36 – Joanna C *B*

1 – 7.36 – Bryana C *A*

2 – Anne B *B*

2 *1* 58 – Casey B

63/64 – 58 – Mackin C

2 *1* 7.36 – Matt D

2 63/64 7.36 – Matt P

2 58 – Sean H

1 – 63/64 – Jacob D

1 – 63/64 – Aaron F

2 7.36 – Brandon G

*Sister Prejean
&
Colleen
&
Marybeth Perley*

*Chaplain, Warden, Deloris
Matt Poncalet.*

2 Alexa *B*

DEAD MAN WALK
Tentative Cast List
9/01/2011

Ensemble: Everyone who auditioned is cast in the ensemble
1st rehearsal is Tuesday Sept 6 at 3:30pm

Speaking Parts:

Sister Helen Prejean:

Bryana C & Joanna C

Mother of Sister Helen: Gaby C ✓
Colleen (Prejean's friend): Alexa V ✓
Herbie (student): Monique Ng ✓
Sister Marie Augusta Neal: Kendra H ✓

Matt Poncelet: Casey B ✓
Lucille Poncelet: Jackie J ✓
Mitch Poncelet: Joey B ✓
Jim Poncelet: Sean S ✓
Troy Poncelet: Phillip V ✓

Earl Delacroix: Matt D ✓
Walter Delacroix: Matt Y ✓
Hope Percy: Kaylee M. ✓
Clyde Percy: Jacob DB ✓
Marybeth Percy: Veronica V ✓
Emily Percy: Celeste C ✓

Chaplain Farley: Matt P ✓
Warden Hartman: Mackin C ✓
Sgt. Beliveau: Brandon G ✓
Guard (Trapp): Aaron F ○
Guard (Female): Emma F ✓
Guard (#1): Isaac G ✓
Guard (#2): Derek H ✓
Nurse: Caitlin M ✓

Luis Montoya:

Hilton Barber:

Guy Gilardi:

Governor:

Reporter (#1):

Reporter (#2):

Reporter (#3):

Victims' Families

Woman #1:

Woman #2:

Woman #3:

Man #1:

Man #2:

(Wo)Man #3:

Caitlan G ✓
Megan D ✓
Sean H ✓
Massimo N ✓
Kyrsten H ✓
Ashley R ✓
Olivia O ○

Abby R ✓
Sabrina N ✓
Christina L ✓
Darby C ✓
Kareem A ✓
Molly B ○

Project: Discourse 2011 – *Dead Man Walking*

Actor Name: _____ Role: _____

Actors' Cell Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Parents/Gaurdian Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Circle if interested -

Parents/Guardians able to help creating: Set Costumes Publicity Props Concessions

Donate lunch/dinner for Cast & Crew at rehearsals? Yes No Maybe

.....
_____ Required Cast Fee: \$50* T-Shirt Size _____

(Cast Fee Includes scripts, portions of costume/tech, faculty supervision and one t-shirt)

**If this is a financial hardship, please contact Mr. Williams about applying for the Angel club.*

_____ Additional T-shirt: \$10 each T-Shirt Size _____

_____ Become an Angel! - Angel Club Donations: \$125 or more

_____ Sponsor the Play - tax deductible donations to sponsor set, costumes, sound, or other elements

General Admission Pre-order tickets:

Student Pre-order = \$10 Adult Pre-order = \$10 - (This form only)

_____ FRIDAY Nov 18 7:30pm # tickets _____

_____ SATURDAY Nov 19 7:30pm # tickets _____

_____ TUESDAY Nov 22 7:30pm # tickets _____

_____ Total amount enclosed

This form is due by Friday September 23rd to Mr. Williams

Please make all Checks out to Mater Dei High School, Attn. Project: Discourse

Contact _____ with any questions or concerns.

Dead Man Walking - Sign-in 8/30/11

Sign-in Attendant:

Kendrick + Jackie

Page #

#	Name	Grade	Signed Audition Form		Script Returned?		
1	Katie Smake	10	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A
2	Olivia Obermyer	12	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
3	Danielle L'Heureux	10	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
4	Matt Pancoe	12	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
5	Jacob DeBilio	10	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A
6	Joey Busch	10	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A
7	Quais Chilvers	11	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
8	Markin Carol	10	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
9	Kyrsten Head	10	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
10	Matthew Yopez	10	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
11	Anne Bright	10	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A
12	Peggy Lefebvre	10	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
13	Massimo Napoli	10	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
14	Phillip Venti	9	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
15	Veronica Valencia	12	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
16	Abby Ribisi	11	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
17	Carlin Mathias	12	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A
18	Kylie McCaffrey	11	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> N/A
19	Austin Kendrick	9	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> N/A

Truong Thai Student # 9723

Dead Man Walking - Sign-in 8/30/11

Sign-in Attendant:

Kendra/
Jackie

Page #

#	Name	Grade	Signed Audition Form	Script Returned?
20	Celeste Corza	9	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
21	Sophia Pinkston	9	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
22	Bryana Corza	12	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
23	Jackie Janowicz	12	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
24	Joanna Corey	12	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
25	Caiflan Guillen	12	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
26	Casey Brecher	11	(Yes) No	(Yes) No N/A
27	Christina Lugo	11	(Yes) No	(Yes) No N/A
28	Matt Dallal	12	(Yes) No	(Yes) No N/A
29	Megan Deussenberry	11	(Yes) No	(Yes) No N/A
30	Sean Hunter	10	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
31	Madelyn B. Kish	9	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
32	Menique Nguyen	10	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
33	Darby Campbell	10	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
34	Lily Schlacht	10	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
35	Pilar Santana	10	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
36	Angelica Muñoz	11	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
37	Robin Rense	11	(Yes) No	Yes No (N/A)
38	Gaby Cefaly	11	(Yes) No	Yes (No) N/A

Dead Man Walking - Sign-in 8/30/11

Sign-in Attendant:

Page #

Kendrea/Jackie

#	Name	Grade	Signed Audition Form	Script Returned?
39	Kaylee Mageen	11	Yes <u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u> <u>No</u> N/A
40	Polly Hager Brown	9	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No N/A
41	Carolyn Stephens	9	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No N/A
42	Lindsey Grady	9	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No N/A
43	Julia Silver	9	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No N/A
44	Sean Soper	9	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No N/A
45	Kareem Africa	11	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No N/A
46	Derick Derrick H.	10	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No N/A
47	Alexa Vellanaeth	12	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No N/A
48	Emma Faulkner	11	<u>Yes</u> No	<u>Yes</u> No N/A
49	Isaac Gallardo	10	Yes <u>No</u>	Yes No N/A
50	Austin Frye	10	Yes <u>No</u>	Yes No N/A
51	Saborina Nuño	12	<u>Yes</u> No	<u>Yes</u> No N/A
52	Nelcey Galvez	10	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No <u>N/A</u>
53	Kailee Kuykendall	12	Yes No	Yes No <u>N/A</u>
54	ASHLEY RHYNE	10	<u>Yes</u> No	Yes No <u>N/A</u>
55	Kendra Hennegen	12	<u>Yes</u> No	<u>Yes</u> No N/A
			Yes No	Yes No N/A
			Yes No	Yes No N/A

Dead Man Walking – Project: Discourse 2011

AUDITION APPLICATION FORM – FALL 2011

Thank You For Your Interest in the Theatre Arts Productions at Mater Dei High School

COMPLETE & PROVIDE SIGNATURES – Bring to Auditions Tuesday August 30th

Name: _____ **Student Phone #:** () _____

Student Email: _____ **Parent Phone #:** () _____

Parent/Guardian's Email: _____ **Parent/Guardian's Names:** _____

Please circle appropriate responses for each question below:

Current Grade Level: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

Will you accept any role if cast? YES NO MAYBE

Role interested in: Principal Character Ensemble ANY

Parents/guardians fingerprinted to volunteer through Mater Dei? YES NO

Have you taken THEATRE ARTS I or ADVANCED THEATRE ARTS? YES NO

Have you auditioned for a MDHS play before? NEVER ONCE TWICE MORE

Have you been cast in a MDHS play before? NO YES-plays: _____

Describe transportation to MD? Drive Self Parent/Guardian Carpool Bus Walk

Please List/Describe possible conflicts with rehearsals (*Junior Retreat, Sports, Choir Festivals, etc*):

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to attend the Info Session in September.
- There is a play fee of \$50 due by Sept 16th, if needed our Angel Club can cover the play fee cost.
Failure to list conflicts can cause actor or crew member to lose role/position in play.
- Cast members are required to complete some research assignments to bring to certain rehearsals.
- Cast members are also required to find time to run lines with scene partners outside of rehearsals.
- All policies for the Theatre Arts classroom & the Mater Dei Student Handbook apply at all times, and failure to comply could result in the loss of a role or position in the production.
- Christian Decent behavior and language is expected at all times. No texting/cell at rehearsals.
- Schedules are subject to possible changes based on production needs. Check the Theatre callboard daily. Weekly Updated Detailed Schedules will be posted on the Little Theatre Callboard. Most rehearsals are right after school or on weekends.
- Cast members will need to keep up with their homework assignments and turn in work to teachers.
- Some cast members will need to be excused from all class periods on November 16, 17, 21 & 22nd. They will be performing an abridged version of the script for classes on those days.
- The purpose of this event is to present the play to various audiences in order to provoke discussion. This is an educational collaboration with various departments on campus and with members of the community. *Dead Man Walking* is based on the autobiography by Sister Helen Prejean. It confronts the issues of capital punishment and poverty. These themes will be explored in classes across campus during the week of our discourse.

I understand and agree to the information provided on this form.

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

DEAD MAN WALKING
by: Tim Robbins

Audition Monologues

Please choose one of the following monologues.

Other monologues from the script maybe used too.

Memorize and prepare to perform it at the audition on August 30th.

Sister Helen Prejean:

Have you been reading your bible? You know Matt, redemption isn't some kind of free ticket admission that you get because Jesus paid the price. You need to participate in your own redemption. You've got some work to do. You may want to check out some words of Jesus that might have some meaning for you: "You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." It's in the Gospel of John, chapter 8. Matt, if you die, as your friend I want to help you die with dignity and you can't do that, the way I see it, until you own up to the part you played in Walter and Hope's death.

Sister Helen Prejean:

Takes a lot of strength to turn the other cheek, Matt. You say you like rebels. What do you think Jesus was? His love changed things, Matt. People that nobody cared about, prostitutes, beggars, the poor, finally had someone that respected them, loved them, made them part of a family, made them realize their own worth. In his eyes they had dignity and were becoming a social force, a threat to the established order and that made the guys at the top very nervous and so they went and arrested Jesus. He was not at all like you, Matt, not at all. He created a better world. He changed it with his love. You stood by and watched while two kids were killed.

Sister Helen Prejean:

Do you want your last words to be words of hatred?

Let's talk about what happened. Let's talk about that night. What possessed you to be in the woods that night? Now don't blame the drugs, Matt. You'd been harassing couples for weeks before this happened. Months! What was it? Did you look up to Vitello? Did you think he was cool? Did you want to impress him? You could've just walked away. Stop blaming him. You blame him. You blame the government. You blame the drugs. You blame the Percys. You blame the kids for being there. What about Matt Poncelet? Where is he in this story? Just an innocent? Just a victim?

Lucille Poncelet:

That show, Inside Crime, made a story about Mattie and they told how I tried to help him and all, a regular Ma Barker or something. Now I'm famous. I was in a store yesterday and I seen these two ladies eyeing me and as I get closer to them I hear one say, "I just can't wait to hear that they have executed that monster, Matt Poncelet. That's the mother of the killer!" they say. But they're right. I don't know. They think I wasn't there for him. They think I taught him to kill. What do you think, Sister? You think I look like the mother of a killer?

Sometimes I want to pretend I'm not his mother so people will leave me alone, not hate me. That's terrible, huh?

I keep trying' to figure out what I done wrong.

Marybeth Percy:

Hope had just graduated high school in early May. She was to join the Air Force on June 15th, the day it happened. She almost got out of Slidell.

I had taken her shopping the day before to get some things she would be needing. Then Hope left to go to work at Corey's where she waitressed.

After work she had a date with Walter. As she was leaving I noticed that part of her hem was coming out of her skirt.

You don't know when you see your child leave through a door that you are never going to see your child again. If I had known I would have told her how much I loved her. My last words to her - the last she ever heard from me - was about the hem of a skirt.

Matt Poncelet:

We're special here. They keep us away from the general population of the prison. We're the elite because we're going to fry.

It's hard not to get soft in the cell. I press my footlocker, lift it, try to get my muscles in shape but its hard not to get fat. Rice, potatoes, pancakes and beans. Sometimes I feel like a sow on a farm that's being fattened up for a Christmas slaughter.

I had a dream once that I was about to be fried in the chair and a guard came into my cell with a chef's hat on and started to roll me around in breadcrumbs licking his chops and all. Maybe you think I'm a weirdo to have dreams like that but your mind does funny things when you're locked up and surrounded by people that want to kill you. Anyway. Thanks for writing. I don't get many letters. Visitors either. No one in my family seems able to make the trip out here. I understand. It's a long drive from Slidell.

Matt Poncelet:

I didn't know who to call. I know I'm on death row but there's guys been here for years. I didn't know this was coming. They set a date. They're gonna kill me. I gotta do something. I didn't know you need a lawyer to get a pardon board hearing. I'd do it myself if they'd let me but they say "No lawyer, no hearing." Sister, come through for me. You all I got. They got me on a greased rail to the death house. I ain't heard from you. You ain't fadin out on me are you, Sis?

Chaplain Farley:

It's very easy for someone to come in from the outside and make a rash judgement on procedure. What may appear on the surface to be irrational or unnecessary proves upon examination to have solid reasoning and experience behind it. And experience tells us that music stirs up emotion, emotion that may produce an unexpected reaction in the inmate.

Are you familiar with the Old Testament. "Thou shalt not kill but if thou shed the blood of man by man shall your blood be shed"? Reconciliation is achieved by accepting God's love. Poncelet has to understand that Jesus died for his sins if his soul is to live an eternal life. The politics of the death penalty are not what's important here. I certainly hope you're not encouraging him to reject authority.

Clyde Percy:

How can you sit with that scum? This is not a person. This is an animal. No, I take that back. Animals don't rape and kill their own kind. Matt

Poncelet is God's mistake. And you hold the poor murderer's hand? You're going to comfort him when he dies? If you are sorry and if you care about us, you'll want to see justice done for our murdered child. Sister, you're in waters over your head. I'm trying to be respectful because my parents taught me to always respect the religious but I think you need to leave this house. You can't befriend this murderer and be our friend too.

Hilton Barber:

We've got ourselves a private meeting with the Governor. Now listen, from what I know of Governor Fredericks, he's a reluctant supporter of capital punishment. He has the power to save this man's life by commuting the sentence or granting a reprieve, the last vestige of the right of Kings. The trick on this is to appeal to him on a personal level without a lot of fanfare. That's why I've requested a private meeting. Meet me tonight at the State House in Baton Rouge, 7pm.

Governor Fredericks:

Now tomorrow, as you know, the State of Louisiana will put to death Matthew Poncelet. But you must understand, I'm Governor and represent the state and must carry out the laws and must submerge my own personal views to carry out the expressed will of the people. Yes, I'll look carefully at the case but unless there's some clear, striking evidence for innocence and gross miscarriage of justice I will not interfere in the process.

Walter Delacroix:

Sister, I'm a Catholic. How can you sit by Matt Poncelet's side without ever having come to visit with me and my wife or the Percys to hear our side? How can you spend all your time worrying about Poncelet and not think that maybe we needed you too? Listen, Sister, I'm sure you've seen a side of Matt Poncelet that none of us has seen. I'm sure he must be pretty

sympathetic to you. I'm sure he's on his best behavior. But Sister, this is a man that hung out in bars with thieves. This is an evil man. That scum robbed me of my only son, my name. My family name dies with me. There will be no more Delacroixs, Sister.

Walter Delacroix:

Friends were supportive at first, at the time our son was killed but now they avoid us. They don't know what to say, what to do. If you bring up your child's death they change the subject. I keep getting the feeling that they think I should be able to put his death behind me by now and get on with my life. People have no idea what you go through when something like this happens to you. My wife and I are getting a separation. We just have different ways of dealing with our son's death. "Until death do us part" means a different thing now.

Scripts are due back today. If borrowed please turn in to Sign-in attendant at sign-in.

Scripts?

Casey B
Christina L
Jackie J
Anais C
Ann B
Rachel
Emma
Sabrina
Kylie McC
Gaby C
Caitlin M
Matt D
Kendra H
Savannah H
Kaylee M
Aaron F
Joey B
Megan D
Kyrsten H
Megan D
Jacob D.

***DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
DRAFT 2 SCHEDULE, SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS OF 9/6/11***

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9/4	9/5 Labor Day No School	9/6 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 1 st Read thru	9/7 ShortsFest Auditions No DMW Rehearsal	9/8 2:45 to 5:00 2 nd Read thru & table work	9/9 3:00 to 5:00 3 rd Read thru & table work	9/10 No Rehearsal Due to ACT
9/11	9/12 No DMW rehearsal	9/13 ShortsFest Dress No DMW rehearsal 6:30pm – Parent Meeting (9 & 10)	9/14 ShortsFest Performs No DMW rehearsal	9/15 ShortsFest Performs No DMW rehearsal	9/16 3:00 to 5:30 4 th Read thru Leads only	9/17 No Rehearsal Due to Theatre Arts Attending 2:00pm West Side Story
9/18	9/19 3:00 to 6:00 Blocking p.1 to 17	9/20 2:30 to 4:00 Improv Comedy Club Auditions 6:30pm – Parent Meeting (11 & 12)	9/21 3:00 to 5:00 Review & cont blocking Act 1, Stumble thru 1 to 17	9/22 No Rehearsal	9/23 3:00 to 4:30 Blocking p. 20 to 23 & p.29 to 33	9/24 9:30am to 12:30pm Block p.24 to 27 Review p.20 to 23 & p.29 to 33 *Possibly run p. 1 to 17
9/25	9/26 No Rehearsal	9/27 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:30 Run p. 1 to 33	9/28 Possible rehearsal	9/29 2:15 to 4:30 Block p. 33 to 38 Run p. 1 to 38	9/30 No rehearsal	10/01 No Rehearsal due to SAT
10/02	10/03 No Rehearsal	10/04 No Rehearsals	10/05 3:00 to 5:00 Block & Work p.38 to 42	10/06 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:00 Block & Work p.42 to 48	10/07 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events	10/08 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events
10/09 HC Dance	10/10 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events	10/11 No Rehearsal	10/12 Testing half day CAST MEAL 12:00 12:45 to 4:00 Run p. 1 to 48 6:45 to 9:00pm 8th Grade Info Night	10/13 ShortsFest Dress Rehearsal Prepare scene from DMW to perform	10/14 6:00 ShortsFest call 7:30 ShortsFest Performance Show DMW scene	10/15 No Rehearsal

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
DRAFT 2 SCHEDULE, SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS OF 9/6/11

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10/16	10/17 No rehearsal	10/18 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Block p. 49 to 54	10/19 3:00 to 5:00 Review Blocking p. 49 to 54 Run/Work p.38 to 54	10/20 2:15 to 4:15 Rehearsal	10/21 3:00 to 5:30 Run & Notes All Act 1 (Off Book!)	10/22 No rehearsal due to ACT testing
10/23	10/24 No Rehearsal due to Improv Club prep	10/25 Improv Club Chuckles for Chairty Halloween Event	10/26 3:00 to 5:30 Run & Notes All Act 1	10/27 2:15 to 4:30 Blocking p.55 to 62	10/28 3:00 to 4:30 Review Blocking p. 55 to 62	10/29 9:30am to 12:00pm Blocking p. 62 to 68 Run & work p. 55 to 68
10/30	10/31 Halloween, No Rehearsal	11/01 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Blocking p. 74 to 78	11/02 3:00 to 5:00 Blocking p. 68 to 74 Ensemble scenes	11/03 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:45 Run & work p. 55 to 78	11/04 No Rehearsal Due to Servite Football Game	11/05 9:00am to 4:00pm Block p. 78 to 91 12:00pm – MEAL 1:00pm Blocking to p. 95 & Act 2 run
11/06	11/07 3:00 to 6:00 Blocking p. 95 to 97 Work Monologues <i>Prejean, Matt, Delacroix, etc.</i>	11/08 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 2	11/09 3:00 to 6:00 Run/notes/work Act 1	11/10 2:15 to 5:30pm Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/11 3:00 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/12 No Rehearsal, Do homework! Dance Showcase 7:00
11/13 8:00am Load-in Set, Sound, Props MEAL 12:00 1:00 to 6:30 Tech cues, then Tech run show	11/14 3:00 Costumes 4:00 Company Meeting 4:30 Dress run Act 1 6:00 CAST MEAL 7:00 Dress run Act 2 9:00 Notes Dismiss by 10:00	11/15 Cast get own meals & rest after-school 5:00 Call 6:00 Dress Run 9:00 notes Dismiss by 10:00	11/16 (tentative) Perform scenes during day for English classes Block 4 & 2	11/17 (tentative) Perform scenes during day for English classes Blocks 0 & 6 Rehearse whole show 1:00 to 6:00	11/18 Cast get own meals & rest after-school 6:00 Call 7:00 House Opens 7:30 Whole Show #1	11/19 6:00 Call 7:00 House Opens 7:30 Whole Show #2
11/20 Day off?	11/21 Perform During Day Block 5	11/22 Perform during Day Blocks 3 & 1 7:30 Whole Show #3	11/23 No School	11/24 Thanksgiving Day	11/25 No School	11/26

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
DRAFT 2 SCHEDULE, SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS OF 9/6/11

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10/16	10/17 No rehearsal	10/18 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Block p. 49 to 54	10/19 3:00 to 5:00 Review Blocking p. 49 to 54 Run/Work p.38 to 54	10/20 2:15 to 4:15 Rehearsal	10/21 3:00 to 5:30 Run & Notes All Act 1 (Off Book!)	10/22 No rehearsal due to ACT testing
10/23	10/24 No Rehearsal due to Improv Club prep	10/25 Improv Club Chuckles for Chairty Halloween Event	10/26 3:00 to 5:30 Run & Notes All Act 1	10/27 2:15 to 4:30 Blocking p.55 to 62	10/28 3:00 to 4:30 Review Blocking p. 55 to 62	10/29 9:30am to 12:00pm Blocking p. 62 to 68 Run & work p. 55 to 68
10/30	10/31 Halloween, No Rehearsal	11/01 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Blocking p. 74 to 78	11/02 3:00 to 5:00 Blocking p. 68 to 74 Ensemble scenes	11/03 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:45 Run & work p. 55 to 78	11/04 No Rehearsal Due to Servite Football Game	11/05 9:00am to 4:00pm Block p. 78 to 91 12:00pm – MEAL 1:00pm Blocking to p. 95 & Act 2 run
11/06	11/07 3:00 to 6:00 Blocking p. 95 to 97 Work Monologues <i>Prejean, Matt, Delacroix, etc.</i>	11/08 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 2	11/09 3:00 to 6:00 Run/notes/work Act 1	11/10 2:15 to 5:30pm Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/11 3:00 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/12 No Rehearsal, Do homework! Dance Showcase 7:00
11/13 8:00am Load-in Set, Sound, Props MEAL 12:00 1:00 to 6:30 Tech cues, then Tech run show	11/14 3:00 Costumes 4:00 Company Meeting 4:30 Dress run Act 1 6:00 CAST MEAL 7:00 Dress run Act 2 9:00 Notes Dismiss by 10:00	11/15 Cast get own meals & rest after-school 5:00 Call 6:00 Dress Run 9:00 notes Dismiss by 10:00	11/16 (tentative) Perform scenes during day for English classes Block 4 & 2	11/17 (tentative) Perform scenes during day for English classes Blocks 0 & 6 Rehearse whole show 1:00 to 6:00	11/18 Cast get own meals & rest after-school 6:00 Call 7:00 House Opens 7:30 Whole Show #1	11/19 6:00 Call 7:00 House Opens 7:30 Whole Show #2
11/20 Day off?	11/21 Perform During Day Block 5	11/22 Perform during Day Blocks 3 & 1 7:30 Whole Show #3	11/23 No School	11/24 Thanksgiving Day	11/25 No School	11/26

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
DRAFT 2 SCHEDULE, SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS OF 9/6/11

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9/4	9/5 Labor Day No School	9/6 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 1 st Read thru	9/7 ShortsFest Auditions No DMW Rehearsal	9/8 2:45 to 5:00 2 nd Read thru & table work	9/9 3:00 to 5:00 3 rd Read thru & table work	9/10 No Rehearsal Due to ACT
9/11	9/12 No DMW rehearsal	9/13 ShortsFest Dress No DMW rehearsal 6:30pm – Parent Meeting (9 & 10)	9/14 ShortsFest Performs No DMW rehearsal	9/15 ShortsFest Performs No DMW rehearsal	9/16 3:00 to 5:30 4 th Read thru Leads only	9/17 No Rehearsal Due to Theatre Arts Attending 2:00pm West Side Story
9/18	9/19 3:00 to 6:00 Blocking p.1 to 17	9/20 2:30 to 4:00 Improv Comedy Club Auditions 6:30pm – Parent Meeting (11 & 12)	9/21 3:00 to 5:00 Review & cont blocking Act 1, Stumble thru 1 to 17	9/22 No Rehearsal	9/23 3:00 to 4:30 Blocking p. 20 to 23 & p.29 to 33	9/24 9:30am to 12:30pm Block p.24 to 27 Review p.20 to 23 & p.29 to 33 *Possibly run p. 1 to 17
9/25	9/26 No Rehearsal	9/27 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:30 Run p. 1 to 33	9/28 Possible rehearsal	9/29 2:15 to 4:30 Block p. 33 to 38 Run p. 1 to 38	9/30 No rehearsal	10/01 No Rehearsal due to SAT
10/02	10/03 No Rehearsal	10/04 No Rehearsals	10/05 3:00 to 5:00 Block & Work p.38 to 42	10/06 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:00 Block & Work p.42 to 48	10/07 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events	10/08 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events
10/09 HC Dance	10/10 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events	10/11 No Rehearsal	10/12 Testing half day CAST MEAL 12:00 12:45 to 4:00 Run p. 1 to 48 6:45 to 9:00pm 8th Grade Info Night	10/13 ShortsFest Dress Rehearsal Prepare scene from DMW to perform	10/14 6:00 ShortsFest call 7:30 ShortsFest Performance Show DMW scene	10/15 No Rehearsal

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
DRAFT 3 OCTOBER SCHEDULE AS OF 9/30/11

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10/02	10/03 No Rehearsal	10/04 No Rehearsals	10/05 3:00 to 5:00 Block & Work p.38 to 42 Run p. 6 to 42	10/06 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:00 Block & Work p.42 to 48 Run p. 20 to 48	10/07 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events	10/08 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events
10/09 HC Dance	10/10 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events	10/11 No Rehearsal	10/12 Testing half day CAST MEAL 12:00 Ensemble Members & all blocked Act 1 roles 12:45 to 4:00 Run p. 1 to 48 6:45 to 9:00pm 8th Grade Info Night	10/13 ShortsFest & Improv Dress Rehearsal 3:00 to 5:30 Prepare scene from DMW to perform	10/14 6:00 ShortsFest call 7:30 ShortsFest Performance Show DMW scene	10/15 No Rehearsal
10/16	10/17 No rehearsal	10/18 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Block p. 49 to 54	10/19 3:00 to 5:00 Review Blocking p. 49 to 54 Run/Work p.38 to 54	10/20 2:15 to 4:15 Run All Act 1	10/21 3:00 to 5:30 Run & Notes All Act 1 (Off Book!)	10/22 No rehearsal due to ACT testing
10/23	10/24 No Rehearsal due to Improv Club prep	10/25 Improv Club Chuckles for Chairty Halloween Event	10/26 3:00 to 5:30 Blocking p.55 to 62	10/27 2:15 to 4:30 Review Blocking p. 55 to 62 Blocking p. 62 to 68	10/28 3:00 to 4:30 Run & Notes All Act 1	10/29 9:30am to 12:00pm Review, Run & work p. 55 to 68
10/30	10/31 Halloween, No Rehearsal	11/01 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Blocking p. 74 to 78	11/02 3:00 to 5:00 Blocking p. 68 to 74 Ensemble scenes	11/03 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:45 Run & work p. 55 to 78	11/04 No Rehearsal Due to Servite Football Game	11/05 9:00am to 4:00pm Block p. 78 to 91 12:00pm – MEAL 1:00pm Blocking to p. 95 & Act 2 run

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
DRAFT 3 OCTOBER SCHEDULE AS OF 9/30/11

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10/02	10/03 No Rehearsal	10/04 No Rehearsals	10/05 3:00 to 5:00 Block & Work p.38 to 42 Run p. 6 to 42	10/06 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:00 Block & Work p.42 to 48 Run p. 20 to 48	10/07 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events	10/08 No Rehearsals due to Homecoming Events
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10/16	10/17 No rehearsal	10/18 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Block p. 49 to 54	10/19 3:00 to 5:00 Review Blocking p. 49 to 54 Run/Work p.38 to 54	10/20 2:15 to 4:15 Run All Act 1	10/21 3:00 to 5:30 Run & Notes All Act 1 (Off Book!)	10/22 No rehearsal due to ACT testing
10/23	10/24 No Rehearsal due to Improv Club prep	10/25 Improv Club Chuckles for Chairty Halloween Event	10/26 3:00 to 5:30 Blocking p.55 to 62	10/27 2:15 to 4:30 Review Blocking p. 55 to 62 Blocking p. 62 to 68	10/28 3:00 to 4:30 Run & Notes All Act 1	10/29 9:30am to 12:00pm Review, Run & work p. 55 to 68
10/30	10/31 Halloween, No Rehearsal	11/01 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Blocking p. 74 to 78	11/02 3:00 to 5:00 Blocking p. 68 to 74 Ensemble scenes	11/03 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:45 Run & work p. 55 to 78	11/04 No Rehearsal Due to Servite Football Game	11/05 9:00am to 4:00pm Block p. 78 to 91 12:00pm – MEAL 1:00pm Blocking to p. 95 & Act 2 run



Me to **DMW Journals & Schedules**

November Schedule



Turned in (0)

← DUE: Nov 2, 2011

Please download the attached latest version of the rehearsal schedule.



[dmw_schedule_draft_4.doc](#)



Preview

Nov 2, 2011 | [Reply](#) | [Tag](#) ▼

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
NOVEMBER SCHEDULE AS OF 11/01/11

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10/30	10/31 Halloween, No Rehearsal	11/01 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Blocking p. 74 to 78	11/02 3:00 to 4:00 All Cast Called 4:00 to 5:00 Blocking p. 68 to 74	11/03 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:45 Run & work p. 55 to 78	11/04 No Rehearsal Due to Servite Football Game	11/05 9:00am to 4:00pm Block p. 78 to 95 12:00pm – MEAL 1:00pm Blocking p. 95 on & Act 2 run
11/06	11/07 2:50 to 4:30 Prison Staff & Stage Mgt run all scene shifts	11/08 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 2	11/09 3:00 to 5:30 Run/notes/work Act 1	11/10 2:15 to 5:30pm Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/11 3:00 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/12 No Rehearsal, Do homework! Dance Showcase 7:00pm
11/13 TECH 3:00pm Leads & Guards 4:00pm All Cast 6:00 Meal 10:00 end	11/14 DRESS 3:00 Costumes 4:00 Cast Meeting 4:30 Dress run Act 1 6:00 CAST MEAL 7:00 Dress run Act 2 9:00 Notes Dismiss by 10:00	11/15 DRESS Cast get own dinner & rest after-school 5:00 Call 6:00 Dress Run 9:00 notes Dismiss by 10:00	11/16 P:D Forum English classes Block 4 & 2 Eat at Upper-Lunch 7:30am Call 3:30pm End	11/17 P:D Forum English classes Blocks 0 & 6 6:30am Call Lunch Provided Dress Rehearse whole show 1:00 to 6:00pm	11/18 Cast get own meals & rest after-school 6:00 Call 7:00 House Opens 7:30 Whole Show #1	11/19 6:00 Call 7:00 House Opens 7:30 Whole Show #2
11/20 Day off, Do homework	11/21 P:D Forum English Class Block 5 10:00am call Lunch Provided 1:30pm end – go to back to class	11/22 P:D Forum English Classes Blocks 3 & 1 7:30am call Eat at Upper-Lunch 3:00pm end Forum 6:00pm call 7:00pm House Open 7:30 Whole Show #3 10:00pm Strike 11:00pm End	11/23 No School	11/24 Thanksgiving Day	11/25 No School	11/26

DEAD MAN WALKING HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE PROJECT
NOVEMBER SCHEDULE AS OF 11/01/11

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10/30	10/31 Halloween, No Rehearsal	11/01 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 5:00 Blocking p. 74 to 78	11/02 3:00 to 4:00 All Cast Called 4:00 to 5:00 Blocking p. 68 to 74	11/03 2:00 Theatre Club 2:45 to 5:45 Run & work p. 55 to 78	11/04 No Rehearsal Due to Servite Football Game	11/05 9:00am to 4:00pm Block p. 78 to 95 12:00pm – MEAL 1:00pm Blocking p. 95 on & Act 2 run
11/06	11/07 No Rehearsal	11/08 2:30 Improv Club 3:30 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 2	11/09 3:00 to 5:30 Run/notes/work Act 1	11/10 2:15 to 5:30pm Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/11 3:00 to 6:00 Run & Notes Act 1 & Act 2	11/12 No Rehearsal, Do homework! Dance Showcase 7:00pm
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11/20 Day off, Do homework	11/21 P:D Forum English Class Block 5 10:00am call Lunch Provided 1:30pm end – go to back to class	11/22 P:D Forum English Classes Blocks 3 & 1 7:30am call Eat at Upper-Lunch 3:00pm end Forum 6:00pm call 7:00pm House Open 7:30 Whole Show #3 10:00pm Strike 11:00pm End	11/23 No School	11/24 Thanksgiving Day	11/25 No School	11/26



Rehearsals





Samples of Edmodo Rehearsal Journal Entries

During our Table Work week, the cast typed on their iPad2 about the following words.

- Death
- Devotion
- Sacrifice
- Dignity

Kyrsten Head

Death, Devotion, Sacrifice & Dignity in relation to the script:

Death

Death is powerful. Like a sonic boom that can be felt for miles around. Even if you're not directly involved you can feel it, you can sense it. Death brings rebirth. Rebirth of a faith once faded, of a love lost, of a mind disintegrated by the toxics of the dissolute. When a forest catches fire, everything is scorched alive and withers to the ground. But after the fire stops the and the smoke clears, the seeds sprout up and the forest is reborn.

It brings peace like waves comforting the shore, or inner chaos like the waves beating on the hull of a ship amidst the storm clouds. Matt's death brought new life to the Delacroix's & the Percy's and awakened an acute conscientiousness in Helen.

Devotion

Helen was so devoted to her faith that she responded to the call of Jesus regardless of her comfort zone. The American Humane Society was founded in a seaside town on the East Coast because the islanders realized that many ships were sinking just off shore because there was no lighthouse. To prevent more loss of human life they built shacks along the shore and set a schedule for watch. Whenever the watch person saw a ship in trouble they would gather the town and they would jump into life boats and row out to sea. It didn't matter if it was the middle of a storm or if there was no one left to save, what was important to them was that they tried and they put their life on the line for others. The motto of the American Humane Society is "You have to go out, you don't have to come back." Sr. Helen is much like one of those people, sure she didn't row out in a boat near a rocky coastline but she had the courage and devotion to save someone else even if it meant she would be ridiculed, or harmed. Her devotion is exemplified through her willingness to go out knowing that she might not come back.

Sacrifice

The giving of yourself for the benefit of others. Sr. Helen sacrifices her reputation, her friends, and her comfort zone when she decides to help Matt Poncelet. She gives Matt her time, attention and the love and respect that every human being deserves. What's more is that not only does she help him but she continues to fight to abolish the death penalty by spreading the message of love, and forgiveness.

Dignity

Noticable self respect without conceit. Sr. Helen is dignified because she has a great sense of purpose but not a sense of entitlement. In the face of adversity she stays strong to her cause and yet respectful of Matt's adversaries which takes an immense amount of courage and humility.

Massimo Napoli
Dead Man Walking Journals

9/6/11

Death: to me death means the end, and a unclear future behind it

Devotion: to me devotion means a great love and/or a great commitment to a person or cause

Sacrifice: to me sacrifice(a willing one) means love

Dignity: to me dignity is a good non-boastful pride

9/8/11

Death in Theatre: on the stage it can be a tragic or comedic event. Behind stage it can be a source for emotion

Devotion in Theatre: in theatre devotion usually leads to a good end product of a play. When everyone is devoted to their character they give it their best.

Sacrifice in Theatre: Sometimes in theatre we must sacrifice things for our partners, because they are more important than we are. That also means that your partner may sacrifice something for you.

Dignity in Theatre: We must have dignity in theatre, so that if someone were get a part we wanted we wouldn't be jealous and still work together for the greater good of the play.

9/9/11

Death in the script: Death plays a huge part in the play. Helen, Matt, Colleen, and Hilton are all trying to avoid it coming to Matt. On the other hand Earl, Clyde, and Marybeth all want Matt to die. Death is also their motivation for everything they do throughout the script.

Devotion in the script: Sister Helen is devoted to saving Matt and her devotion makes others devoted. Sister Colleen and Hilton Barber both become devoted, Hilton to helping Matt and Colleen to helping Helen. Also Earl, Clyde, and Marybeth are all devoted to seeing justice brought for their children. Although Earl's devotion is watered down by sadness with the loss of his son, wife, and the end of his family name. On the other hand, Clyde's devotion is boosted through is anger and will stop at nothing to get Matt execute in hope that it will be able to fill a hole inside him.

Sacrifice in the script: in the script Sister Helen sacrifices almost all her time and some of her friendships to help save Matt's life, then save Matt's soul. Helen's sacrifices directly relate to her devotion.

Dignity in the script: dignity plays a large part in Matt's final hours. Sister Helen wants Matt to be able to die with dignity and the only way she can see that is he confessing to the murders. Once Matt finally confesses, Sister Helen says that he can then die with dignity as a son of God.

10/29/11

How death relates to my character: Death doesn't really relate to Governor Fredricks, besides the fact that he's using the executions to gain support for his reelection.

How devotion relates to my character: Devotion once again only relates to Fredricks in that he's devoted to getting reelected.

How sacrifice relates to my character: Governor Fredricks doesn't really sacrifice anything in the play. The only thing he really sacrifices is his morals, once again for reelection.

How dignity relates to my character: Dignity doesn't really relate to Governor Fredricks in any way.

Matthew Yopez

DMW journal..... Death..... Devotion..... Sacrifice..... Dignity.....

To me death is when someone or something is no longer living.

To me devotion is when someone has a great love for something such as acting, or playing sports, or school work.

To me sacrifice is giving up something or someone in order to protect. It can also mean giving someone up to a greater power or authority.

To me dignity is having respect and pride for ones self.

Devotion in theater..... Sacrifice in theater..... Dignity In Theater.

Devotion in theater can be when an actor has a great love for acting.

Sacrifice in theater can be when something or someone has to be cut from a play or musical. It can also mean when a character has to giving something up for another for their well being.

Dignity in theater is when an actor has pride for the character he plays no matter how big or small of a role.

Death to me in D.M.W was when Matthew poncelet died.

Devotion in D.M.W could be best described between Matthew and sr. Helen. Sr. Helen had so much devotion towards Matthew during his final days that she even starting seeing him more than the kids at Hope house. She was devoted to helping Matthew man up to what he did and help him rech a closer connection with God.

Sacrifice in D.M.W could be best described when Sr.Helen had to let Matthew go. It was a deep sacrifice to her because she had finally made a spiritual breakthrough with Matthew and to have to watch him be executed I'm sure it was just devastating to her.

Dignity in D.M.W could be best described when Matthew poncelet finally confesses to what he did with Sr. Helen.

Mackin Carroll

Death:

There are several threads of death that weave in and out of this play. One, the most obvious, is the actual dying of Walter, Hope, and ultimately Matthew Poncelet. But aside from those harsh, bitter deaths, there is one glorious death in the play. When Matt, choking back tears, admits to his wrongdoings, there is the death of the old Matthew. But Matthew, the Phoenix that he is, rises from this with pride and dignity.

Devotion:

Devotion in DMW is Sister Helen. She, above all else, is dedicated to doing what is right. Not doing what she is told, but doing what's right. She is constantly faced with adversity, but she never waivers, even for a moment. She may have her doubts, but she always comes through for moral goodness.

Sacrifice:

Sister Helen really makes the biggest sacrifice in the play. She, being blessed with a bountiful life, chose to subside it all in the name of the Lord. She sacrificed her friends, her family, her time, and at times, personal happiness all in the name of the good book.

Dignity.

Dignity, as shown in this play, is something earned. Dignity is not something one is entitled to, nor is it something easily held on to, it is earned. Matthew Poncelet truly earns his dignity, which when we whittle away all the distractions and bells and whistles of life, is all a man ever has.

Emma Faulkner

Journal # 3: September 9th

Death: besides the obvious deaths almost everyone in this play loses something. Whether it be a child, a family, brother, sister, everyone is effected. Death in this play is showing how many lives one single death can effect. And not just death but murder, one of the cruelest forms of death

Devotion: Sister Helen Prejean shows deep devotion in this story. She is constantly being told no, and all these men judge her in this situation. She is devoted to getting mad to tell the truth, to redeem his soul. She takes criticism from everyone around her, and she continues to go on with this rough situation when she could have let Farley do the job. It was because she cared, she wanted the best for Matt, even if he did commit a crime.

Sacrifice: Helen was sacrificing her life as it waste be with Matt, and help. Matt, obviously has to sacrifice everything he knows and loves because of his actions.

Jacob DeBilio's Edmodo Journals

DAY ONE

DEATH

The goal that we all must reach that signifies the end of this life and the beginning of a new one.

DEVOTION

To be absolutely 100% with someone no matter what it is they do. To support someone in any endeavor they decide to take.

SACRIFICE

To give something up for the betterment of yourself or another person. To do something you don't want to do to get something that will help you or someone around you.

DIGNITY

To have a peace of mind within yourself

DAY TWO

DEATH IN THEATRE

At many times a person has to act out something that they have never been through, such as death. Each time they're dealing with something that is beyond their comprehension

DEVOTION IN THEATRE

To be committed to a role, a play, or a building of a play is to be devoted. You can't be a serious actor and not be committed.

SACRIFICE IN THEATRE

Sacrifice in theatre is giving your time up because of your respect for your cast and ultimately the play itself.

DIGNITY IN THEATRE

Dignity in theatre is having enough self-worth to go up on a stage and talk in front of a lot of people and being the best you can be. The more comfortable you are about yourself, the better actor you will be.

DAY THREE

DEATH

It relates to her because it is something that is not only unavoidable, but also all around her. It's nothing she can run away from

DEVOTION

Sister Helen shows devotion but not faltering in her support of Poncelat. Not necessarily endorsing everything he says, but instead trying to get him to say the right things

SACRIFICE

Sister Helen shows sacrifice because she gives up her own time to see Mater Dei because she knows he's in need of help

DIGNITY

Sister Helen shows dignity by never giving up her own personal ideals when dealing with Matt Poncelat. Even though he has such strong beliefs about the government and religion, hers never change. That other people respect and appreciate you.

DAY FOUR

DEATH

Death has become a huge part of my character's life. Not only is he constantly reminded of his own daughter's death, but he is obsessed with the death of the person responsible

DEVOTION

Devotion is part of my character's life because he has been devoted to seeing the demise of the murderer who caused him so much pain

SACRIFICE

Sacrifice is part of my character's life because he has sacrificed his time in pursuit of a just goal that is Poncelet's death

DIGNITY

Dignity is part of my character's life because throughout the entire play he never loses his dignity, he doesn't back down from his ideals and keeps true to his beliefs.

Danielle L'Heureux

Death - My Character

Death is such an underlying theme in my character's past. The whole reason my character is at the victims' support group in the first place is because of the death of my daughter, 4 year old son, and husband. I created that backstory for myself to get more involved with my character so I can better understand the theme of death.

Devotion - My Character

My character is for the death penalty, so she is very devoted to making sure Matthew Poncelet dies for his actions. Even though my children weren't the ones murdered, I am in a position where I know how it feels to lose a child, or, in my case, two.

Sacrifice - My Character

My character feels as if she had to sacrifice her children and husband for their murder's amusement. She feels as if justice is long past due, but will never come.

Dignity - My Character

My character almost feels she lost all dignity when her family dies. She doesn't know what to do with herself. I believe that the victims' support group is her first shot at reviving her bruised soul.

Sabrina Nuno
Dead Man Walking

Prompt 1:

Death: is when something is no longer living, a occurrence of sorrow, remembrance, guilt, and grief. Death is a fear shared among men and is a part of life. Everyone must experience it but not one wishes for it to come soon.

Devotion: Putting ones self into something and sticking to it. Making something a priority and being dedicated to it. Devotion means never giving up and always trying to move forward with perseverance. Dedication is similar to this.

Sacrifice: giving up one thing usually for another. Sacrifices are difficult to make but a thing that every person must make at one time in their life. Sacrifices are not usually easy decisions to make but they are usually worth it and will the good of another person.

Dignity : Is in a sense respect for life in itself...having dignity is being an earnest man and never dehumanize any one person. It is respecting the being and human person of not only oneself but also others.

Bryana Corza

Death in dead man walking

It is the coming alive of the what generally is unacceptable, and death of a person in the hands of another and the continuation of that cycle

Devotion in dead man walking

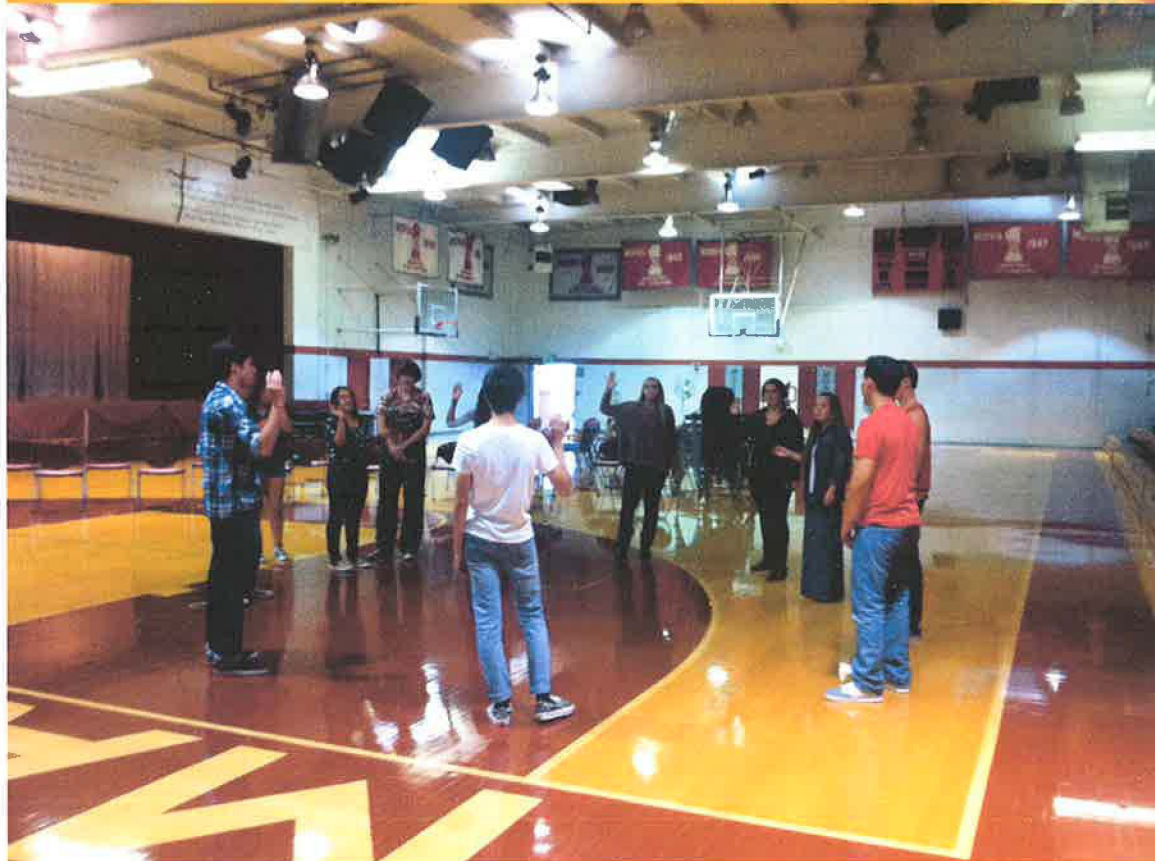
Loving another and wanting the best for that person, not wanting to watch them go through pain alone

Sacrifice in dead man walking

The manner in which Sister Helen Prejean was able to give herself up to Matt and prioritizing him above what was happening at the projects and what the media and others will be thinking of her. The truest form of love is to love one another.

Dignity in dead man walking

The ability to face who your really are, with all your faults and sins and being able to free your self through the truth of who you are













Me to DMW Journals & Schedules



DMW Poll #2

Should Matt Poncelet be executed for his crimes?

Yes 16.67%, 5 vote(s)



Maybe 16.67%, 5 vote(s)



No 66.67%, 20 vote(s)



Total votes: 30 (Refresh)

Oct 28, 2011 | [Reply](#) | [Share](#) | [Tag](#)



Me to DMW Journals & Schedules



DMW Poll #1

Have your views about capitol punishment changed since our first rehearsal?

Yes, I have a completely different opinion now 20%, 6 vote(s)



Yes, but my opinion has only changed somewhat or slightly 53.33%, 16 vote(s)



No, my opinion has not changed at all 26.67%, 8 vote(s)



Total votes: 30 (Refresh)

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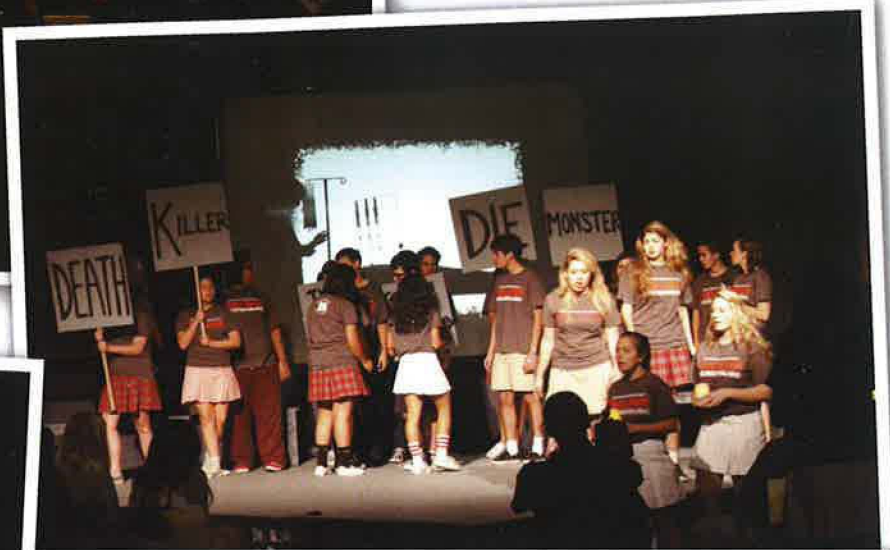
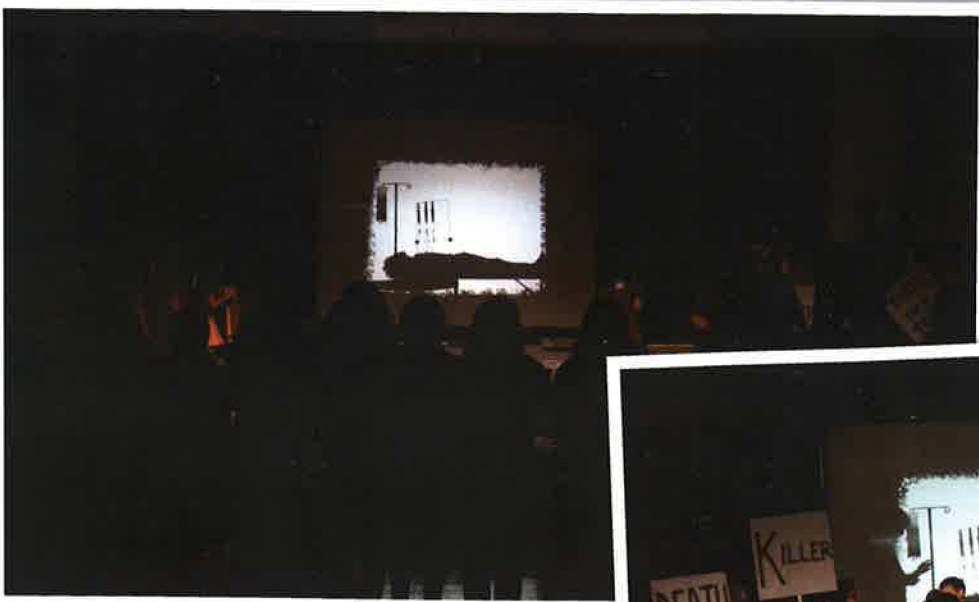


**Film Projections
(Quicktime)**



**p. 19 + p.92 Crime
p. 48 Interview**

Brecht in Effect



PROJECT: DISCOURSE

THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT



Between 1980 and 1990 federal government cuts its contribution to education by 25%.

BUT, increased its allocation for criminal justice by 29%.

\$310 million in cuts
towards education, in
Louisiana.

Since 1973, 2/3 of all Death
Row penalty trials which
completed the appeal
process were found to contain
serious errors requiring their
reversal.

HOPE HOUSE

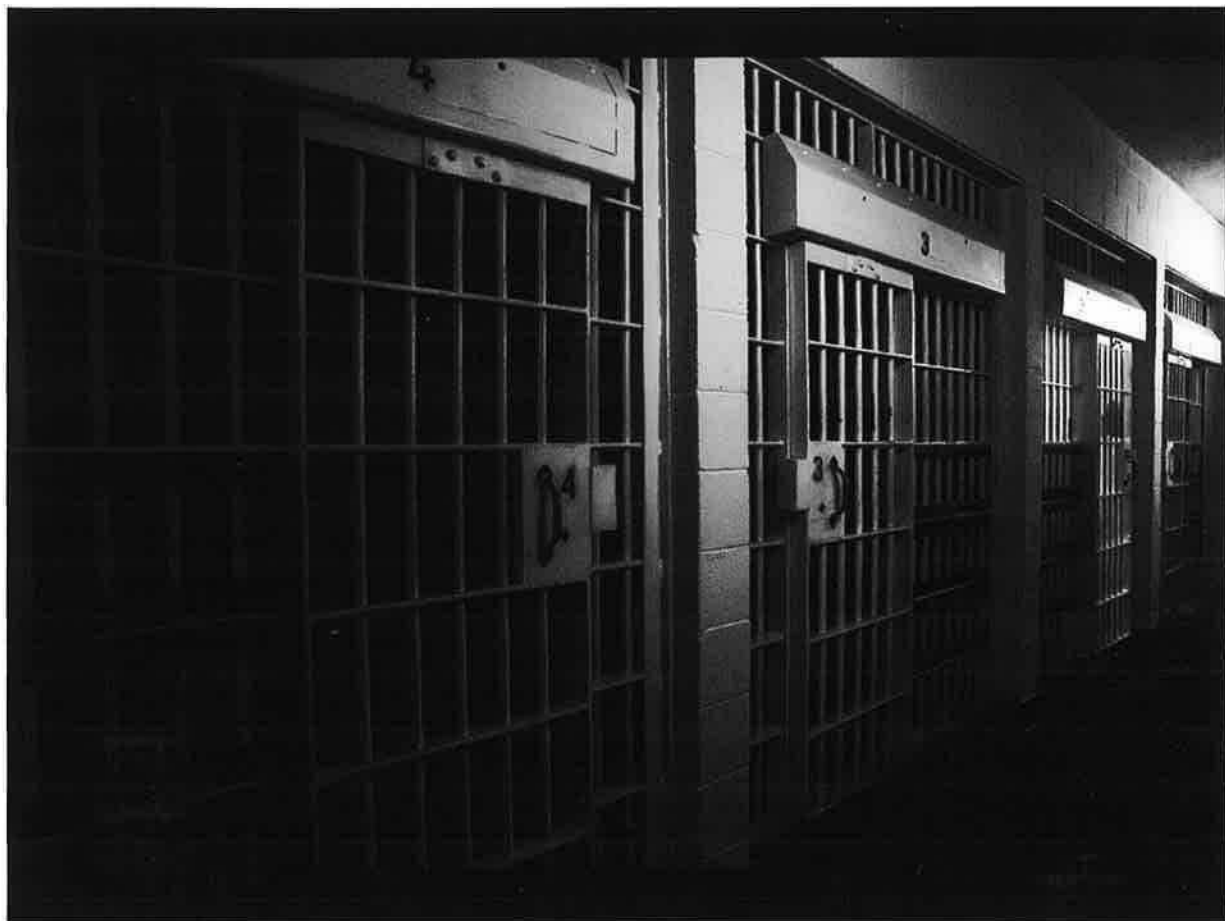


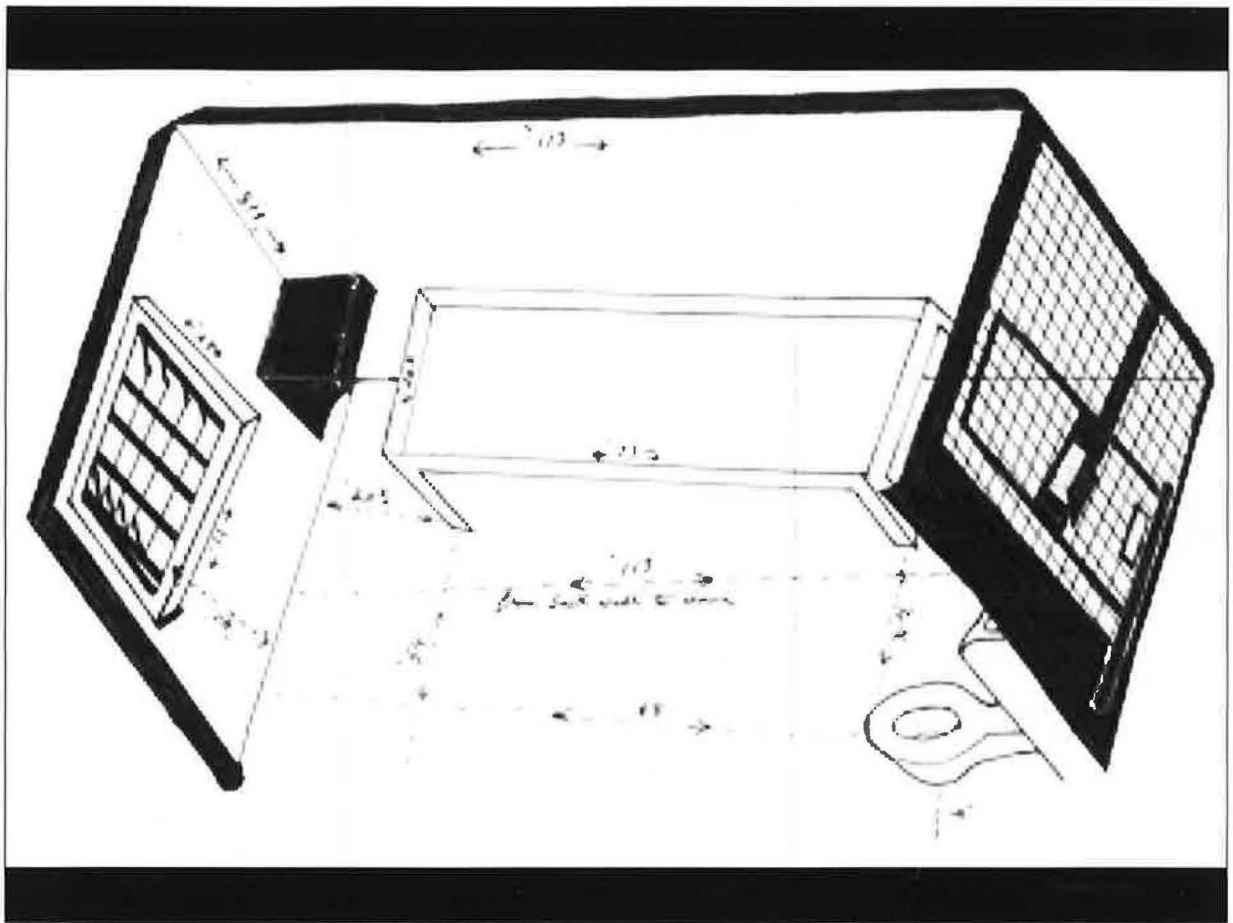
In 1980:

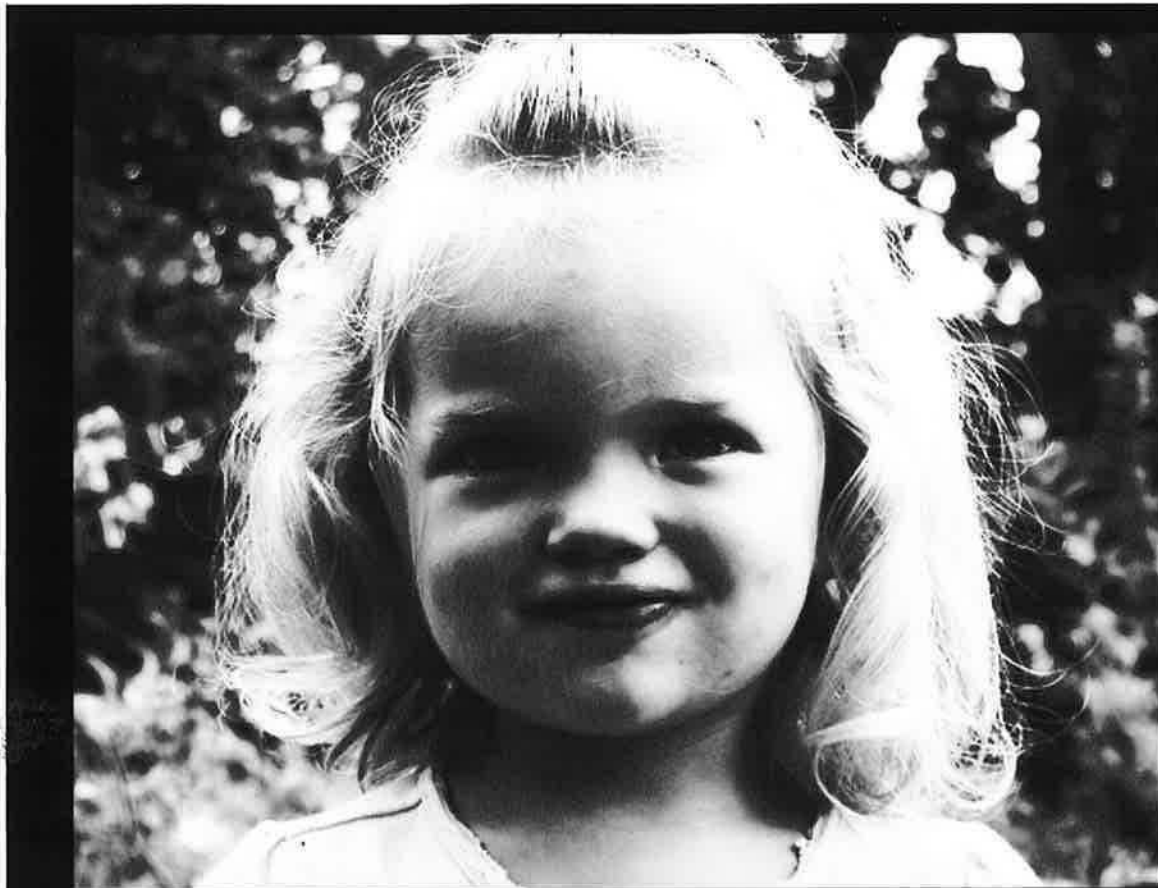
500,000 Americans
behind bars

In 2008:

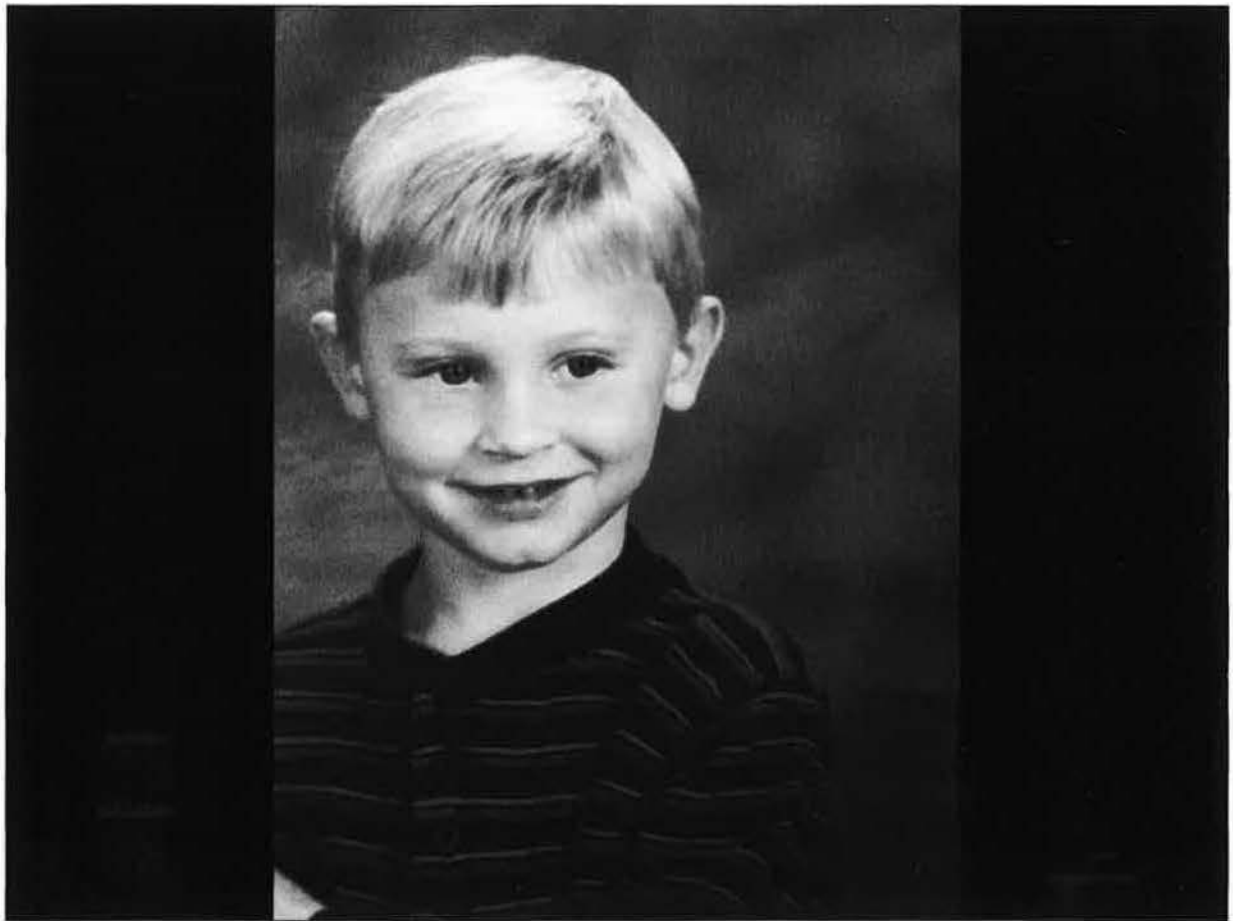
2.3 Million Americans
Behind Bars





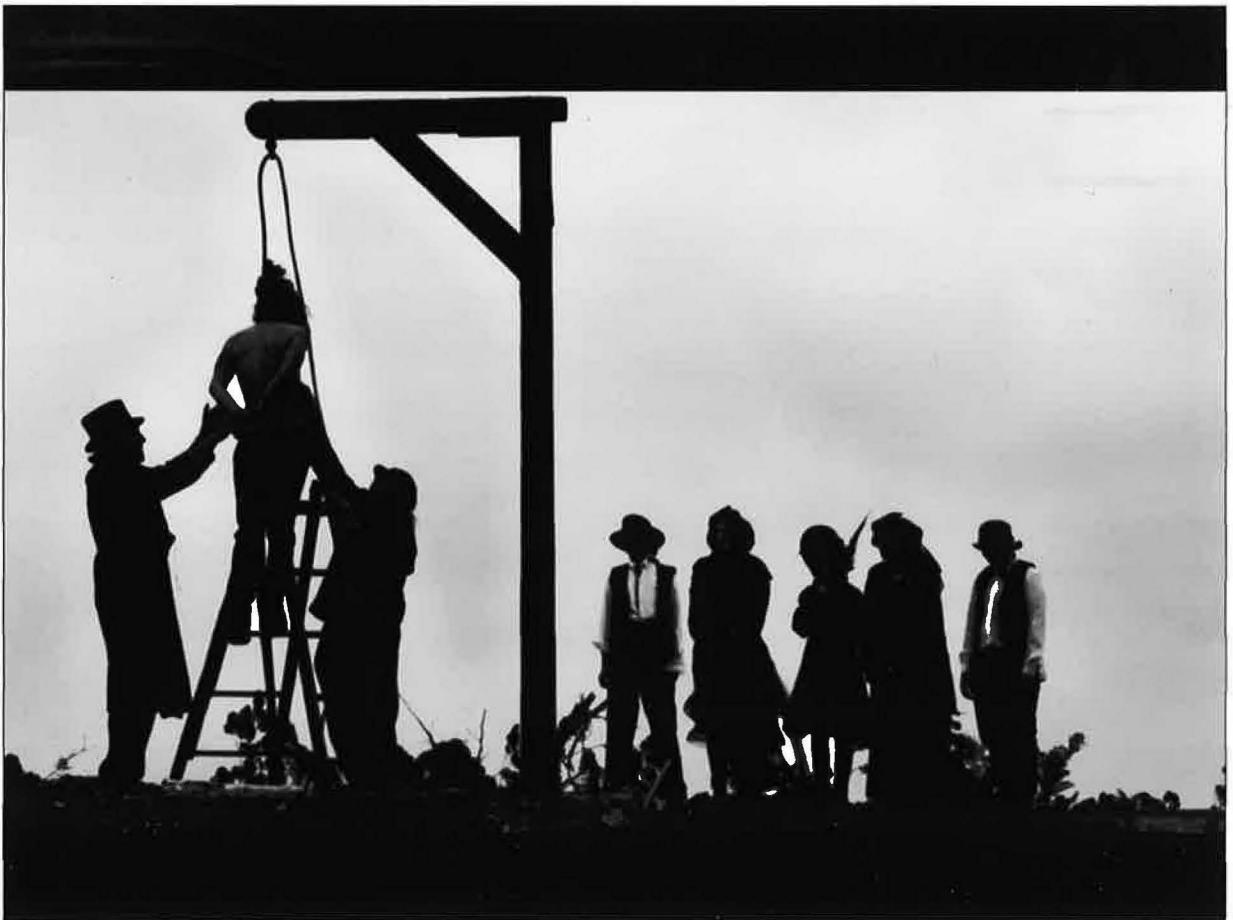
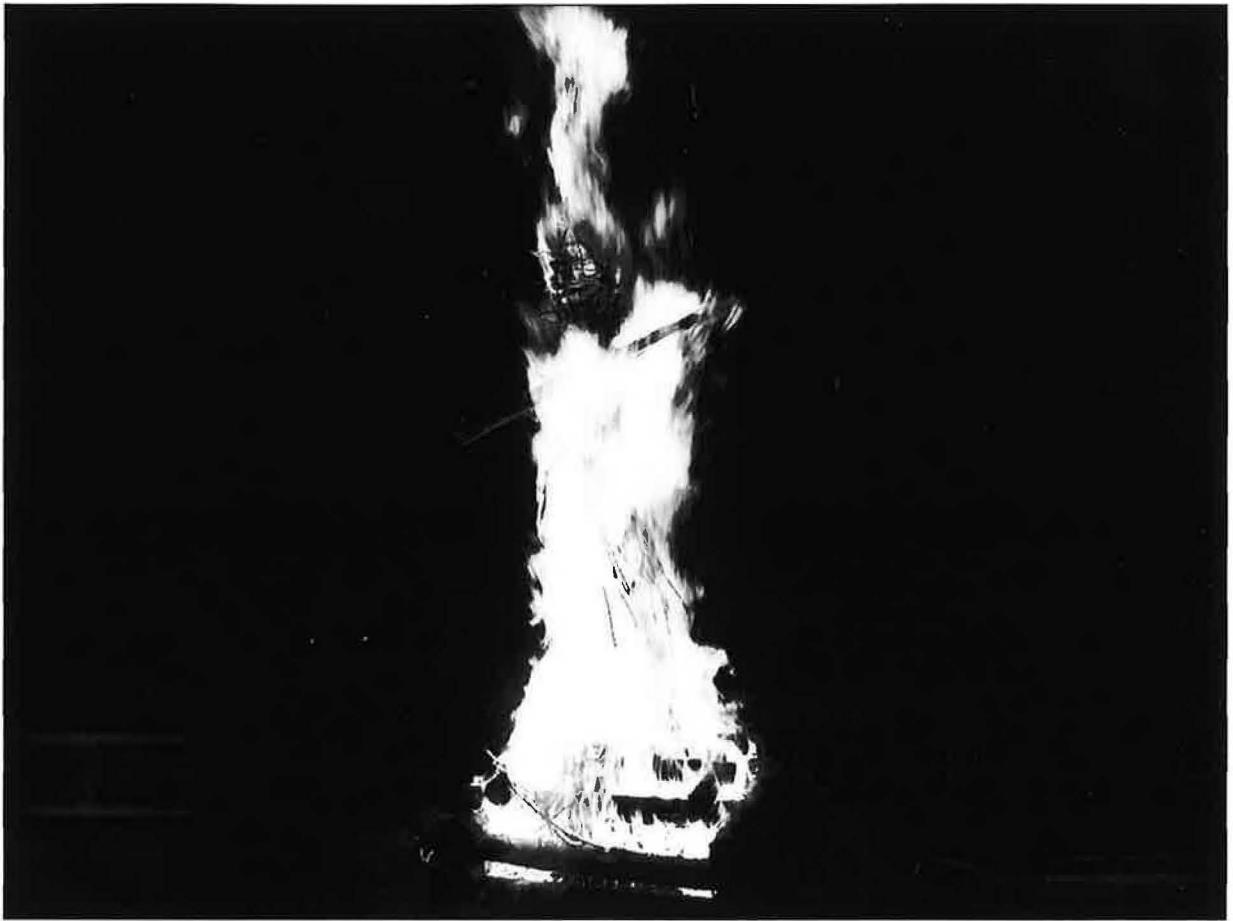




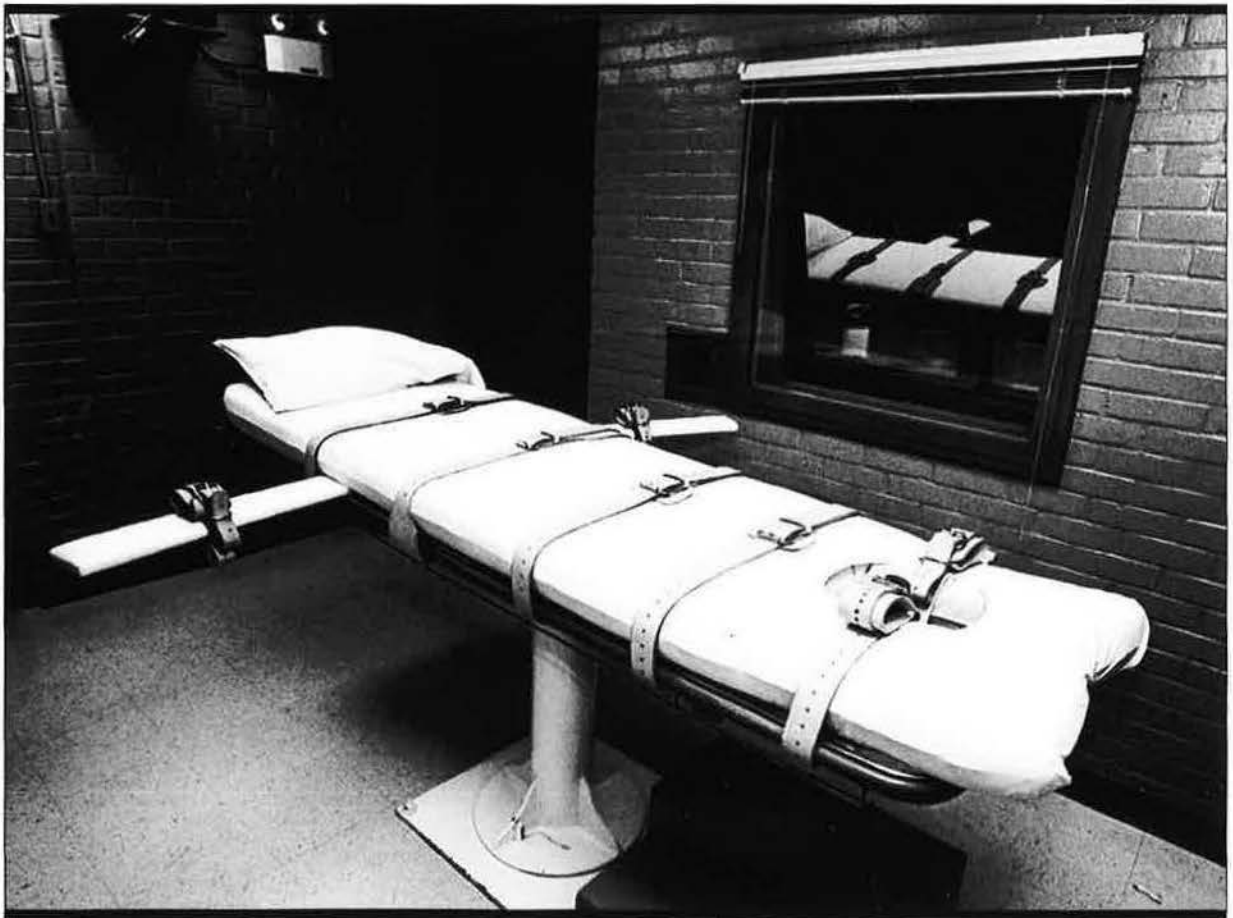








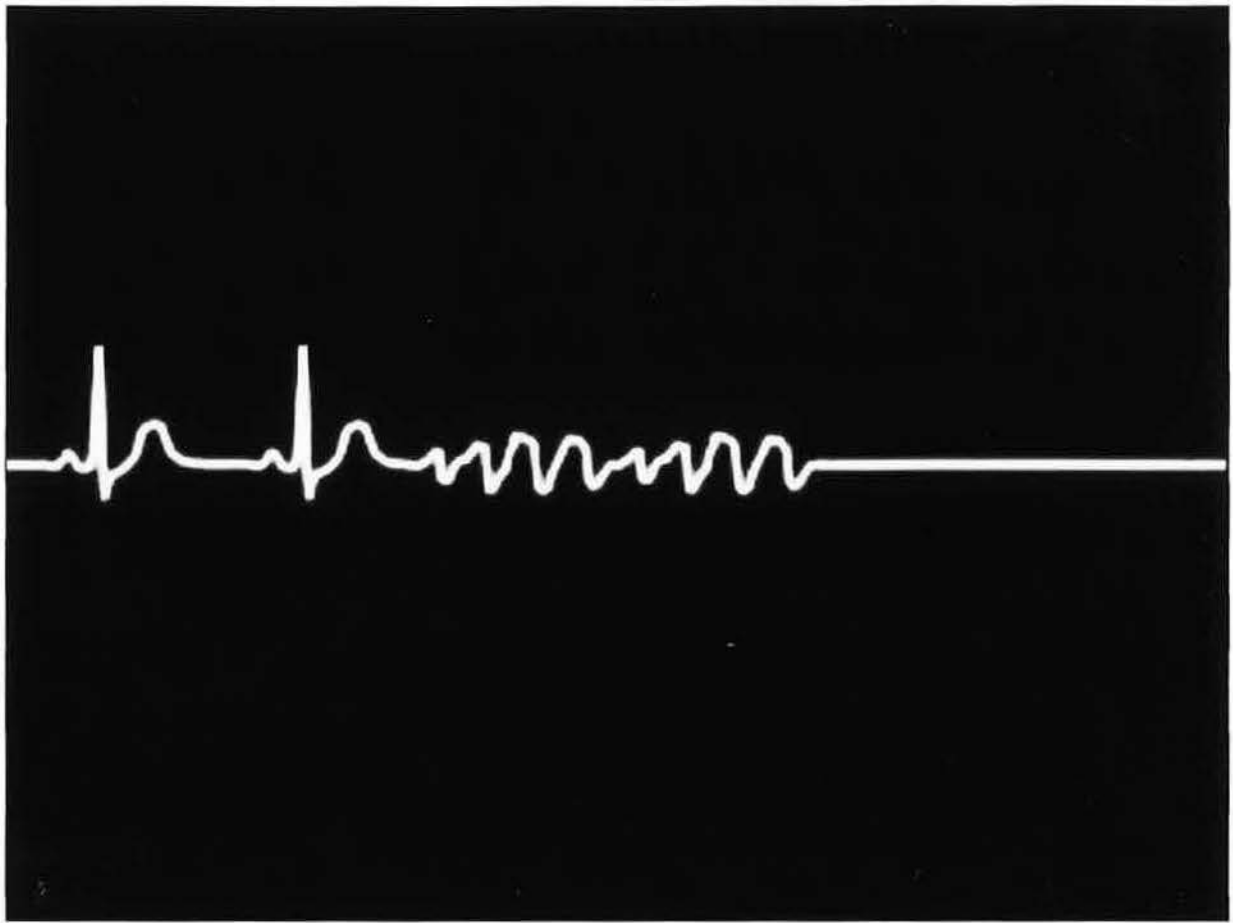


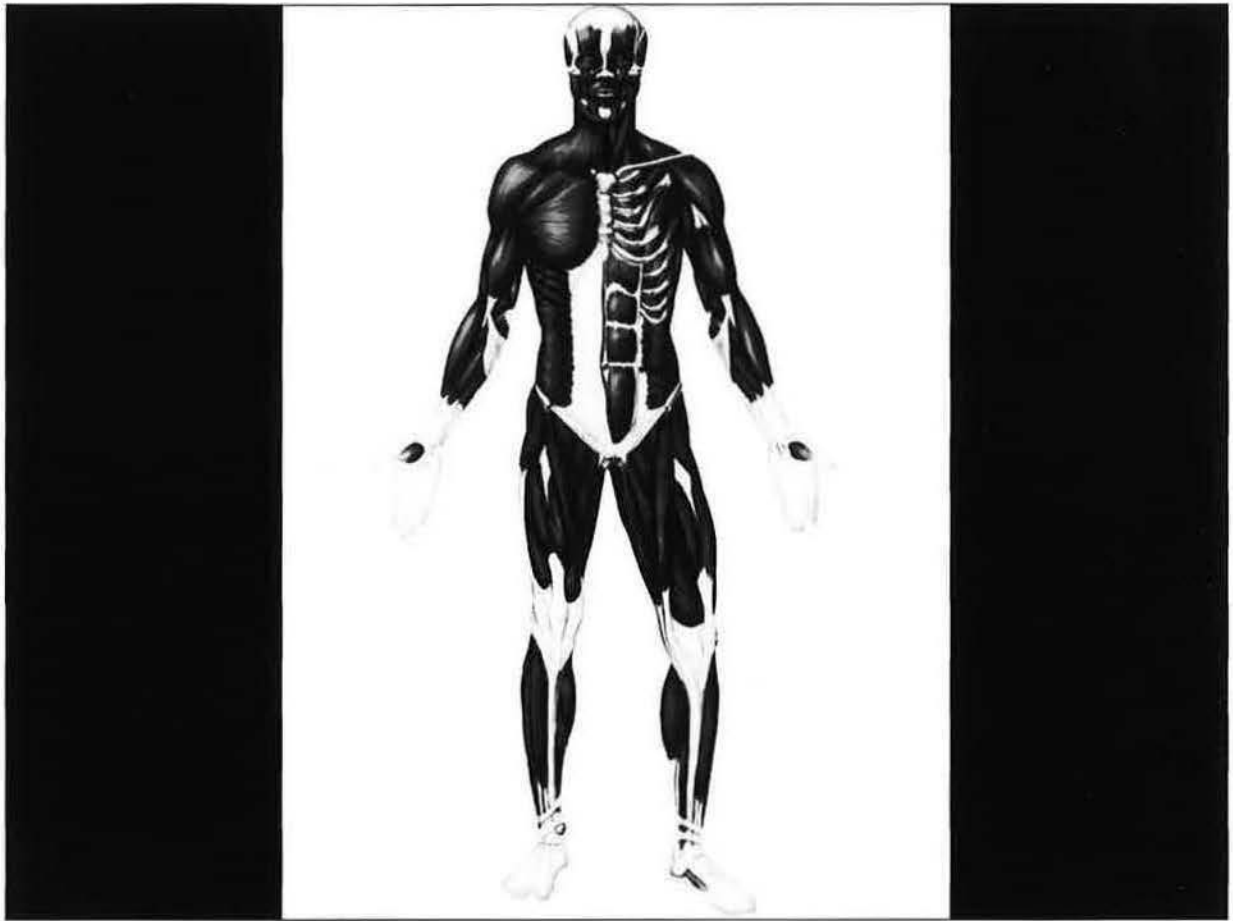


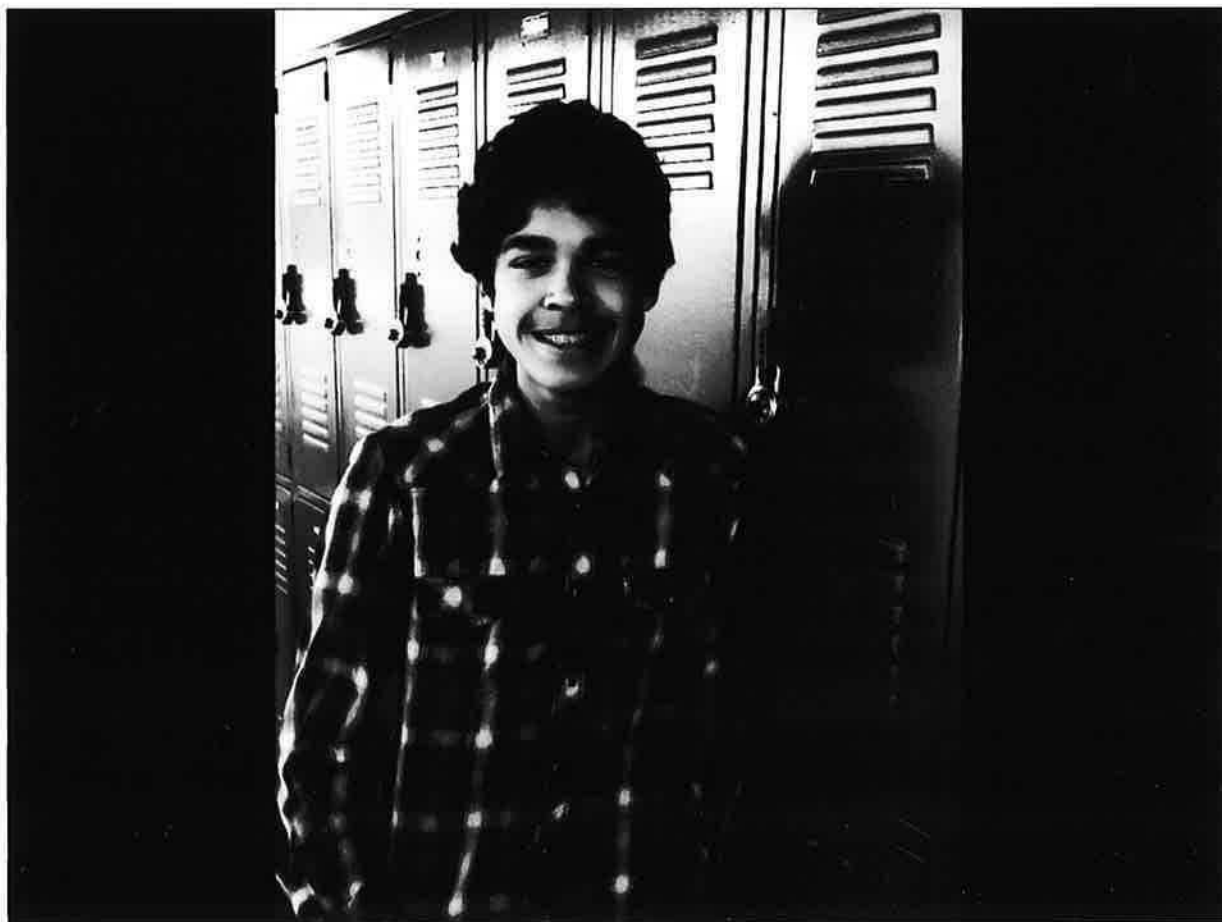




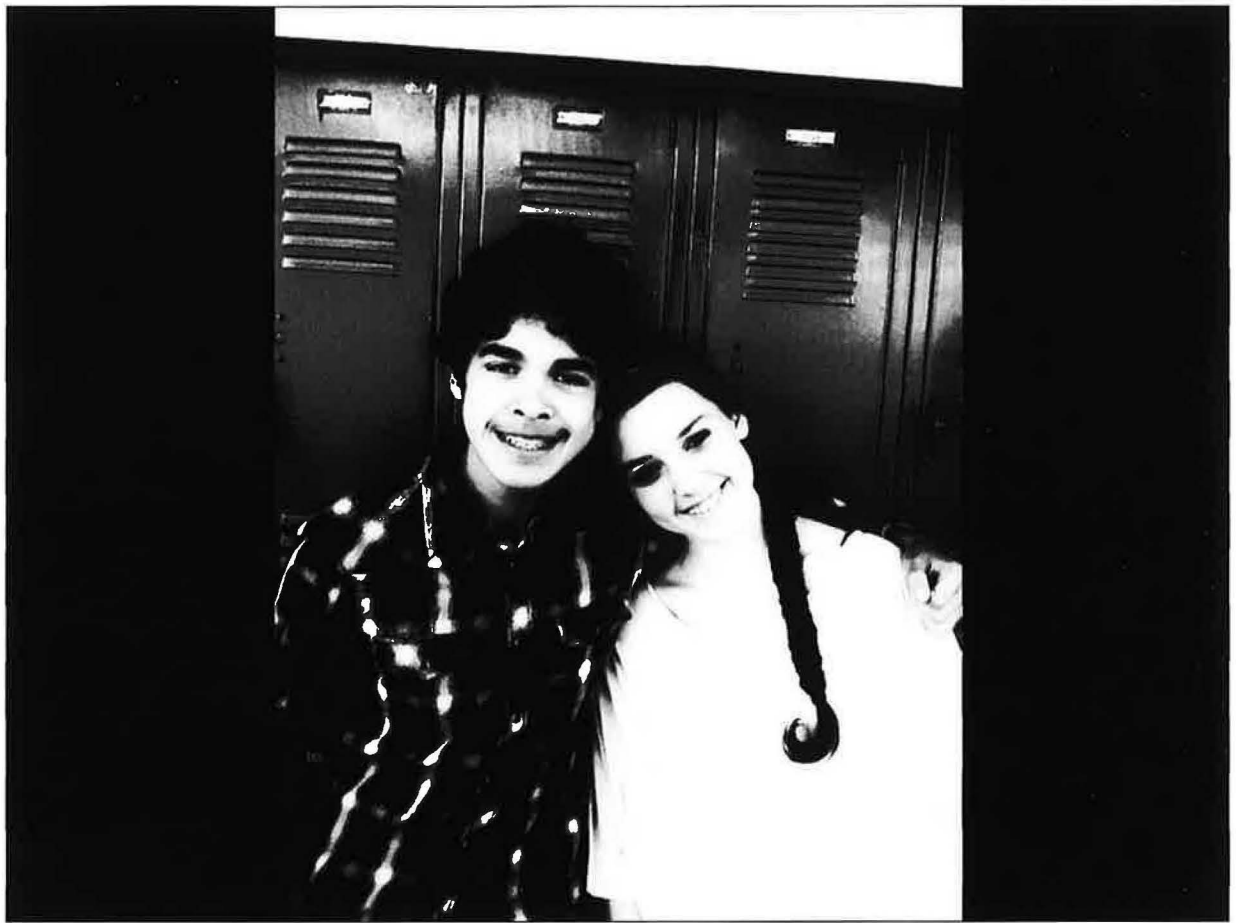




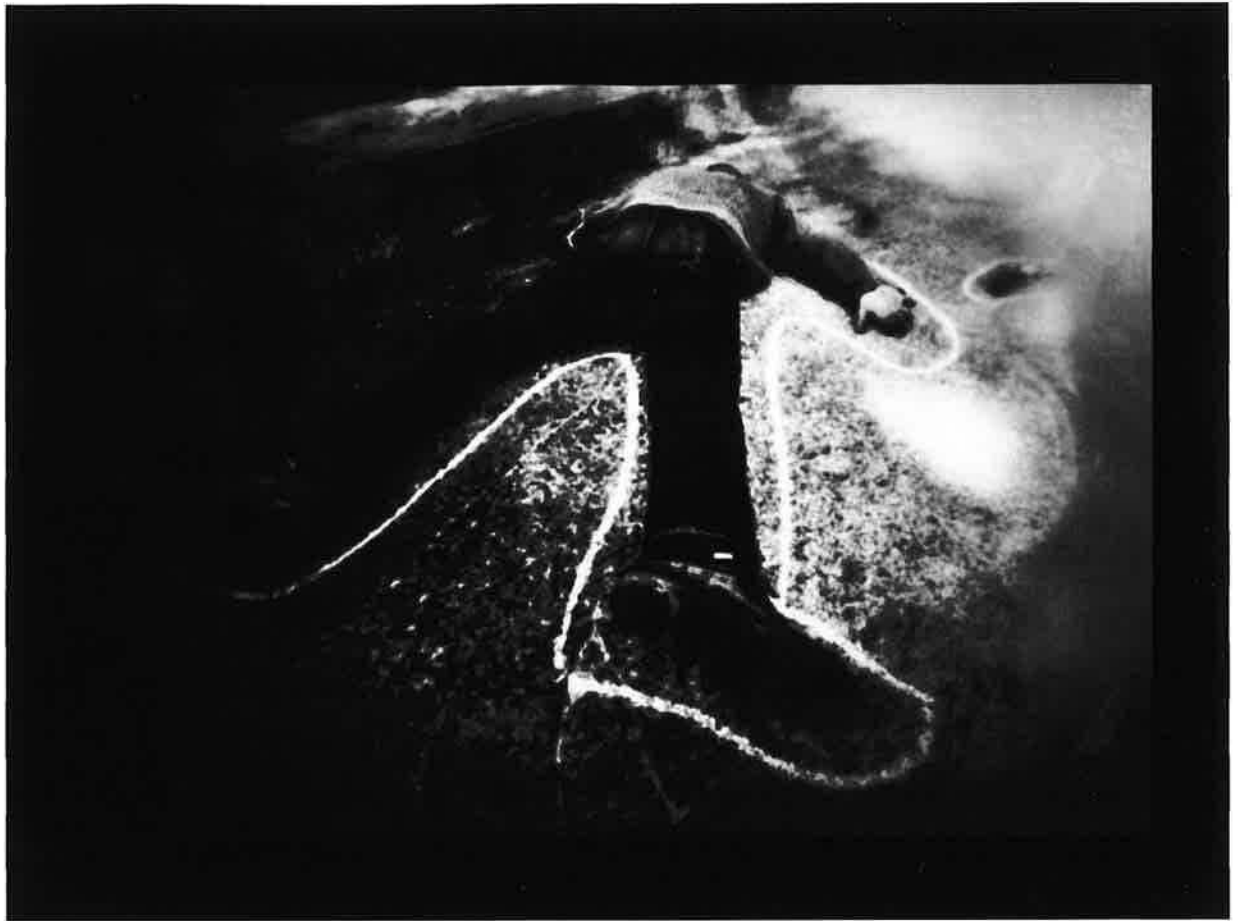






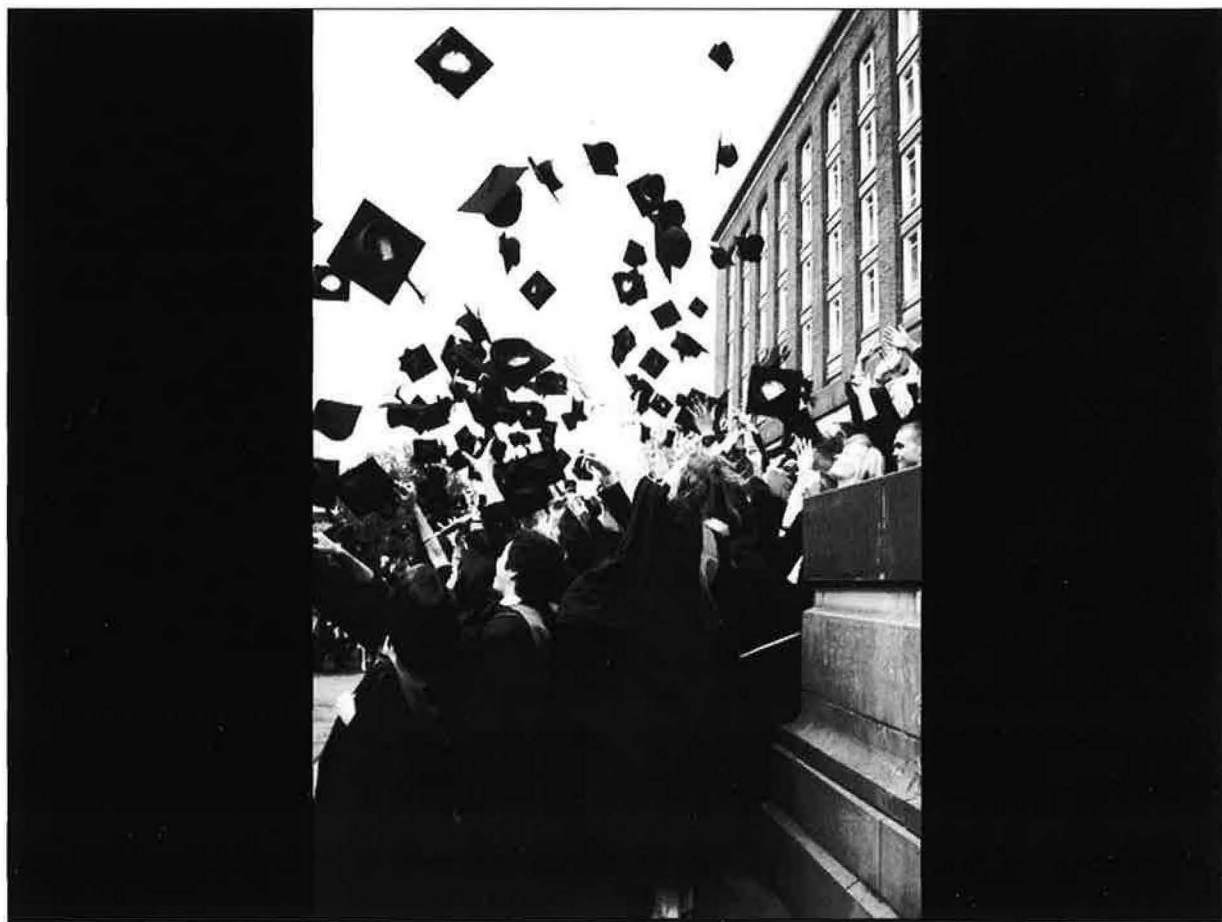
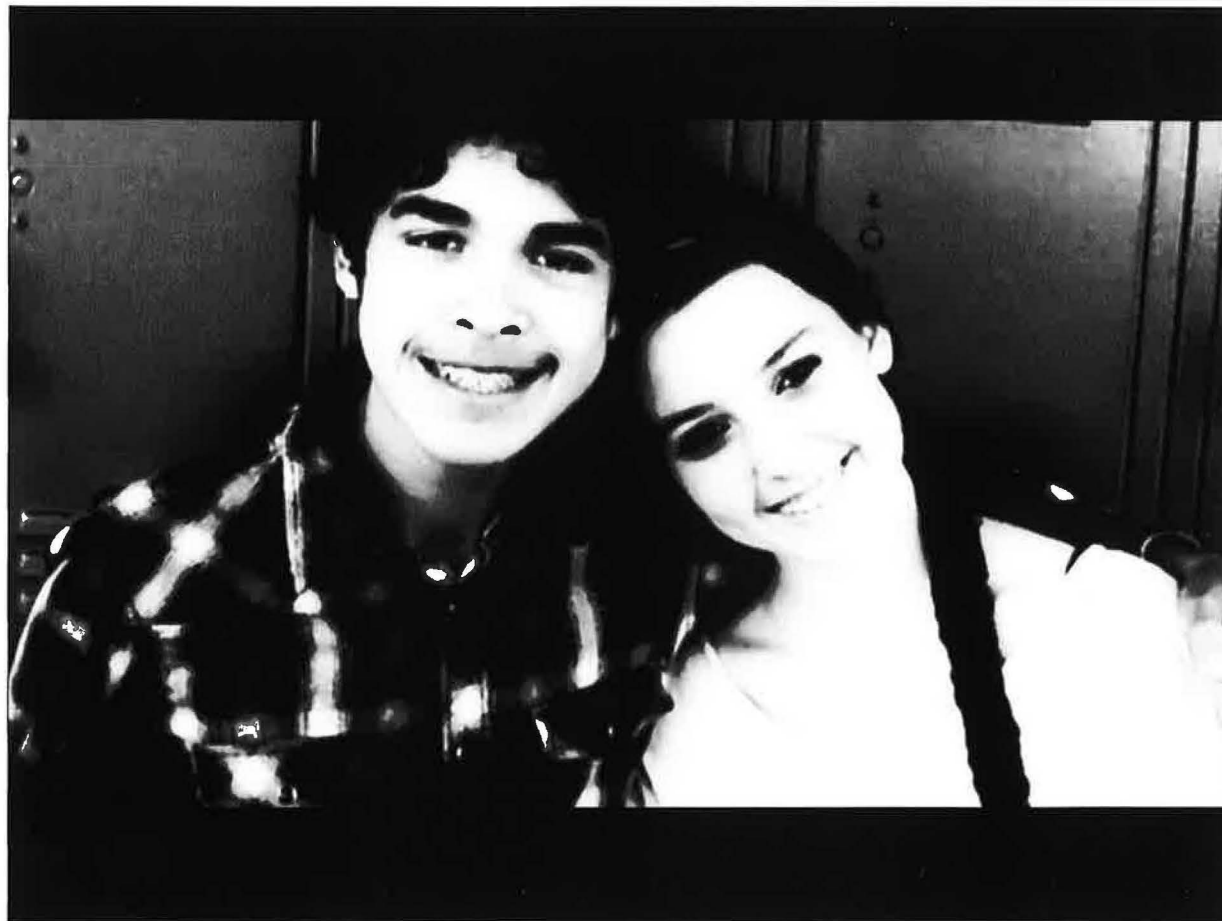


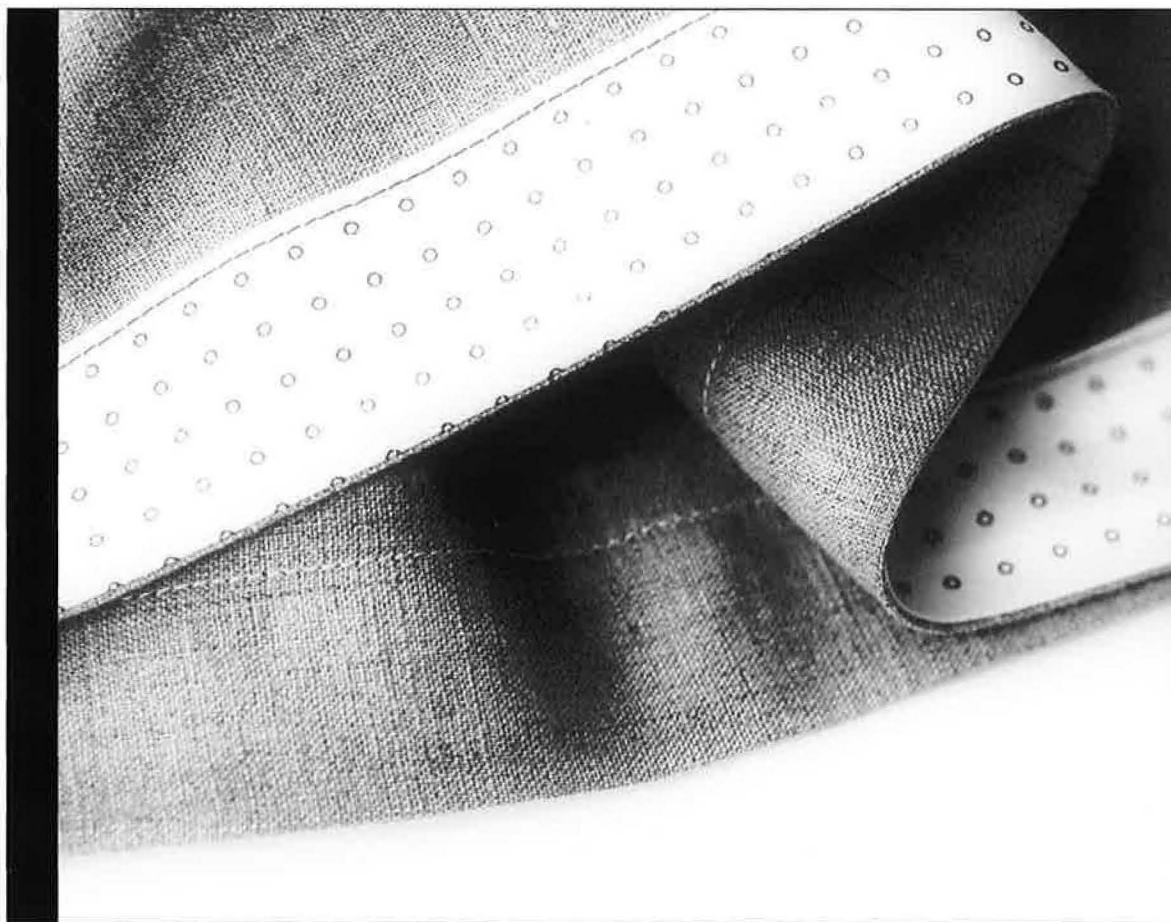


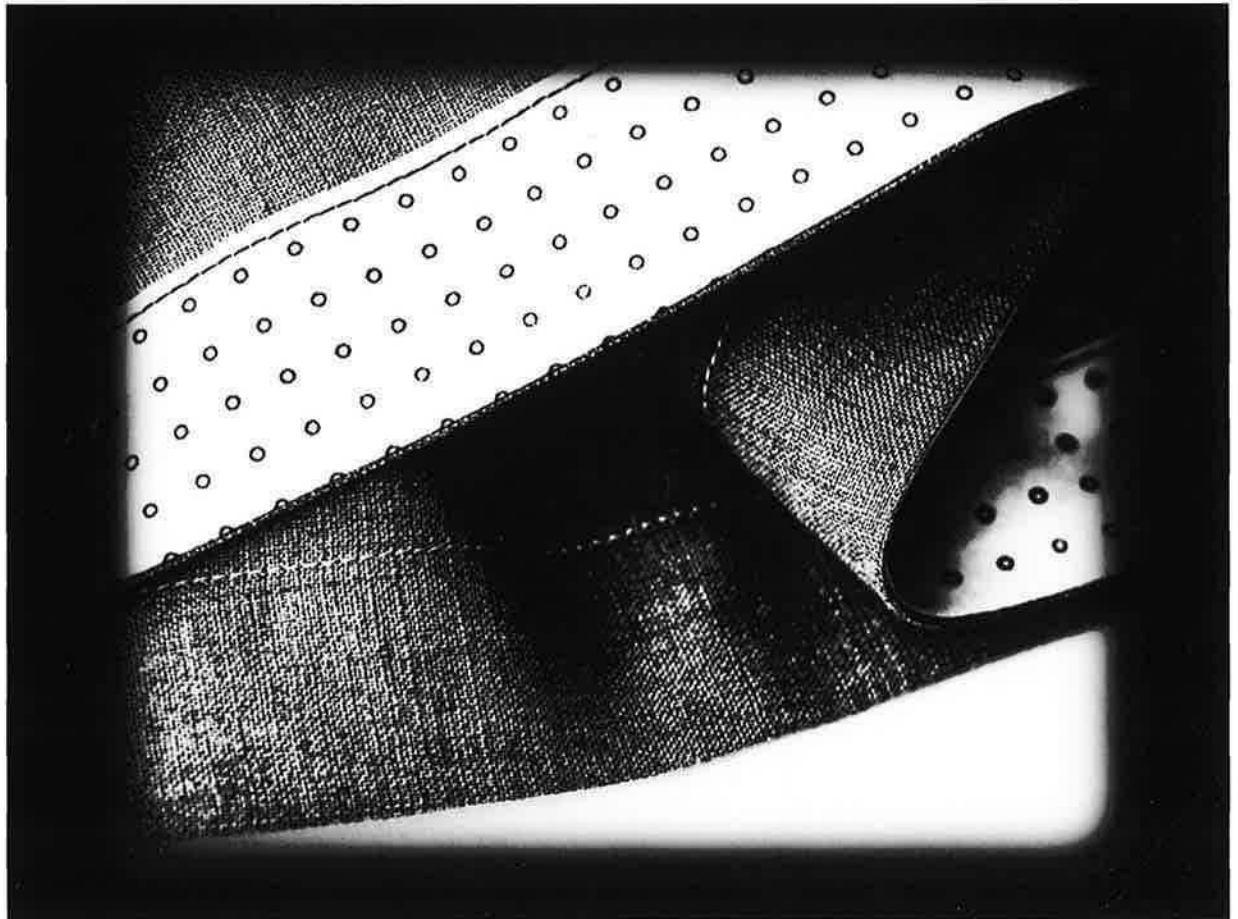


POLICE LINE-- DO NOT CROSS
LINE STOPPERS--



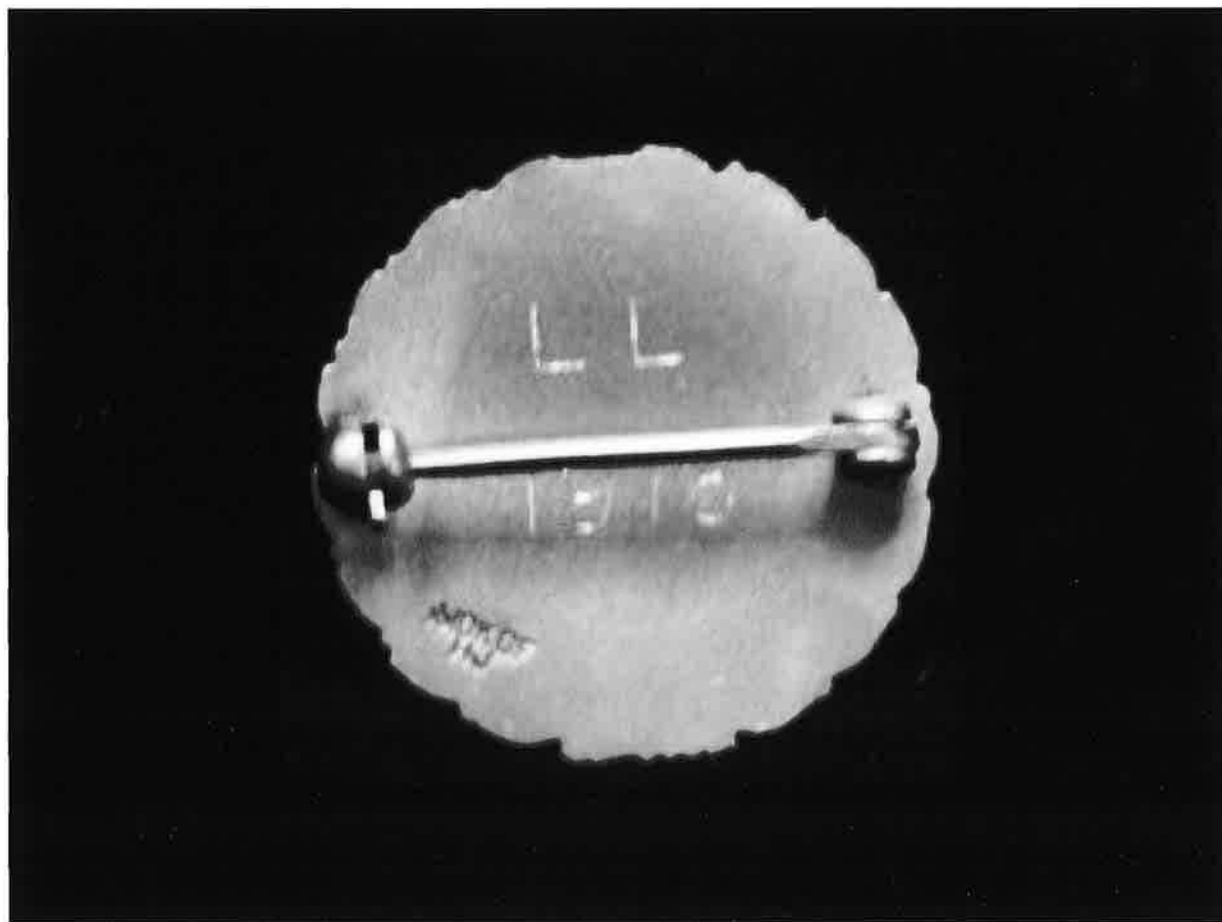


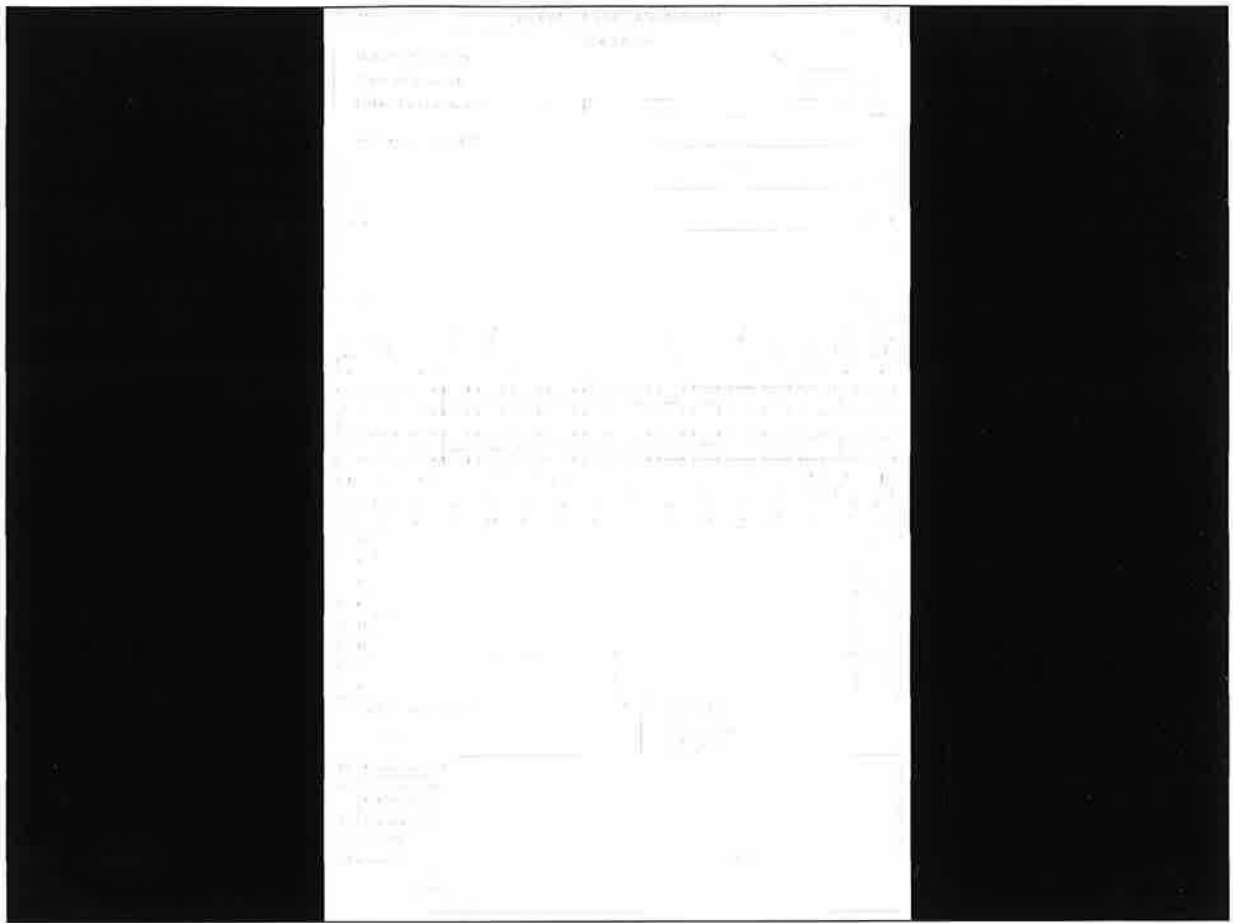




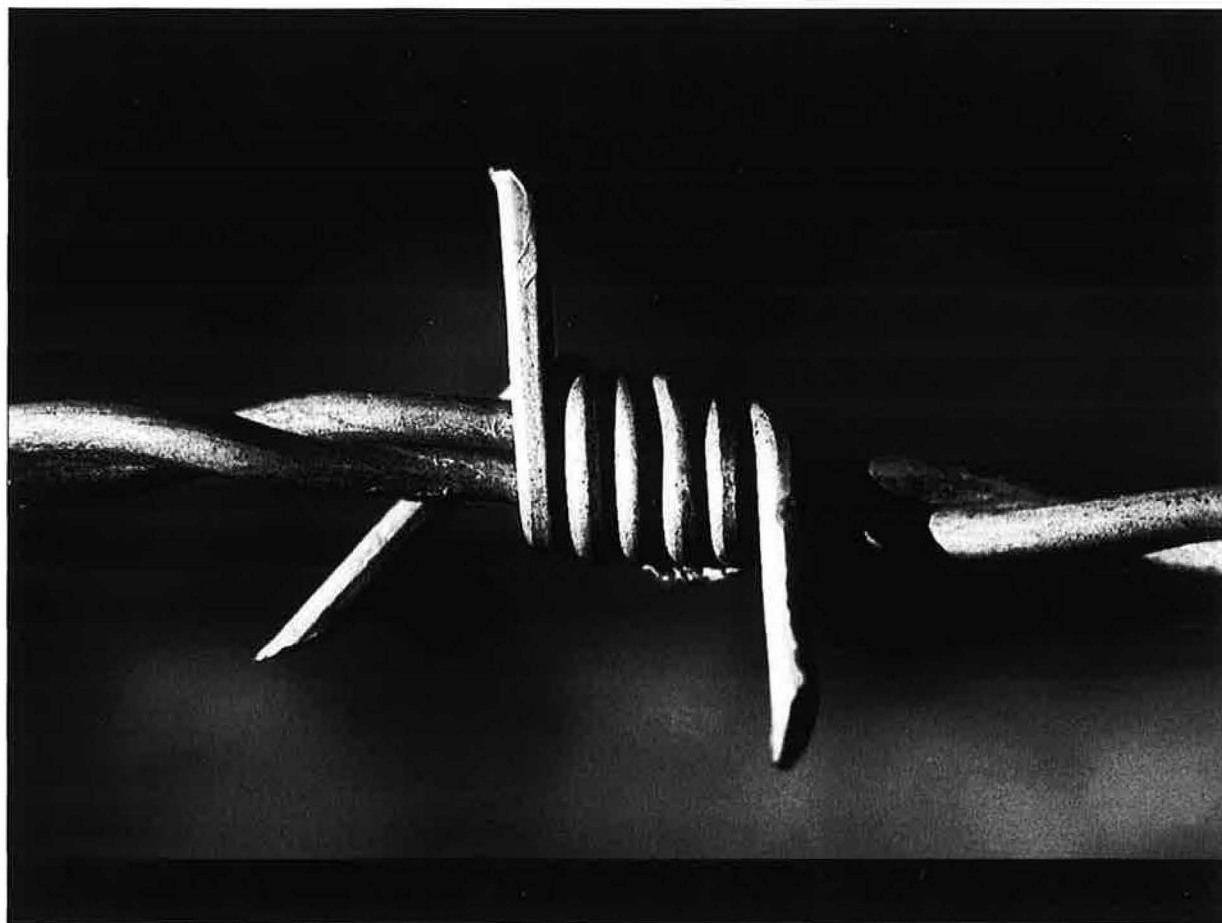














8:00 AM

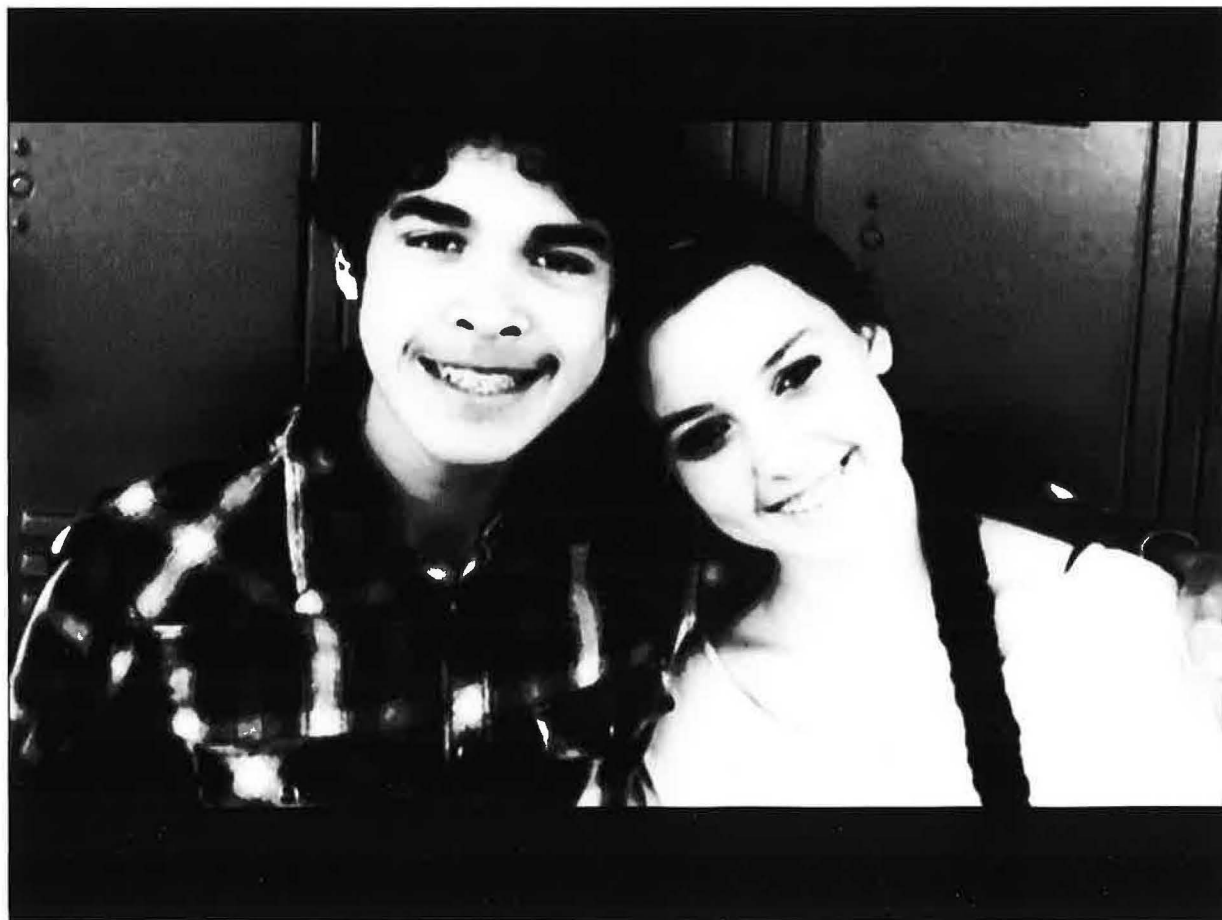
10:30 AM

2:15 PM

6:30 PM



Isaiah 43:2





PROJECT: DISCOURSE

THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT

Thank You For Supporting Project: Discourse 2011

**For more information visit our student created blog:
projectdiscourse.tumblr.com**

For more information about Dead Man Walking:

**dmwplay.org
sisterhelen.org**

A Special Thanks to -

Mater Dei High School Administration,
President - Mr. Murphy, Principal - Ms. Clare,
Mr. Taylor, Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Kittsinis, Mr. Hickman,
Mrs. Welsh-Treglia, Mr. Ritter, Ms. Barnett & Facilities Dept,
Mrs. Pescetti, Mrs. Carrillo, Ms. Jacobson, Ms. George
Mr. Sharp, Mr. Dormitorio, Mrs. McNally and MEI,
Ms. Upham, Mrs. Wilson, Mr. Bulger, Mr. Conrad,
Mr. Greg Callaghan & Dead Man Walking School Project,
Mrs. Elise Forier-Edie & Central Washington University,
Our Panel Guest Speakers, the Forum Presenters,
All MDHS Faculty & Staff Members , All Crew Members,
and all Cast parents (*thanks for food!*)

And a special thank you to all sponsors of this production for
their generosity. You have made this event possible.

MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTS

PROJECT: DISCOURSE
THEATRE TO TALK ABOUT

**DEAD MAN
WALKING**

**BY: TIM ROBBINS
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY:
SR. HELEN PREJEAN**

**Produced with Permission of
The Dead Man Walking School Play Project**

**This Production is being Adjudicated by:
CAPPIES of Orange County
California Educational Theatre Association - CETA**

The Cast of *Dead Man Walking*

Sister Helen Prejean:	Bryana Corza & Joanna Cornejo
Matt Poncelet:	Casey Brecher
Mother of Sister Helen:	Gaby Cefalu
Colleen (Prejean's friend):	Alexa Vellanoweth
Herbie (student):	Monique Nguyen
Sister Marie Augusta Neal:	Kendra Hennegen
Luis Montoya:	Caitlan Guillen
Earl Delacroix:	Matt Dallal
Walter Delacroix:	Matt Yepez
Hope Percy:	Kaylee Mageen
Clyde Percy:	Jacob Debilio
Marybeth Percy:	Veronica Valencia
Emily Percy:	Celeste Corza
Lucille Poncelet:	Jackie Janowicz
Mitch Poncelet:	Joey Busch
	Austin Frye
Jim Poncelet:	Sean Soper
Troy Poncelet:	Phillip Venti
Chaplain Farley:	Matt Pancoe
Warden Hartman:	Mackin Carroll
Sgt. Beliveau:	Brandon Gonzales
Guards	Emma Faulkner, Aaron Fortelny
	Isaac Gallardo, Derek Huynh
Nurse:	Caitlin Mathias
Hilton Barber:	Megan Deusenberry
Guy Gilardi:	Sean Hunter
Governor:	Massimo Napoli

Ensemble:

Kyrsten Head	Ashley Rhyne	Olivia Obermeyer
Abby Ribisi	Sabrina Nuno	Christina Lugo
Darby Campbell	Kareem Attia	Danielle L'Heureux
Angelica Munoz	Katy Smale	Anais Chilvers
Robin Rense	Lily Schlicht	Pilar Santana
Madi Kish	Austin Frye	Julia Silvey

The Production Team of *Dead Man Walking*

Mr. Patrick Williams	Director of Performing Arts
Ms. Karen Pescetti	Performing Arts Secretary
Ms. Anna-Lisa George	Curriculum Coordinator
Mrs. Melanie Carrillo	Costume Designer
Mrs. Catherine Wilson	Publicity Manager
Mr. Robert Conrad	Sound Engineer
Mr. Larry Sharp	Master Electrician
Ms. Melissa Jacobson	Stage Manager
Kailee Kuykendal	Assistant Stage Manager
Mary Beth Buckowski	Props Manager
Robin Rense	Sound Assistant
David Thompson	Light Operator
Kylie McCaffrey	Tumblr.com blog

Preshow Music:	Casey Brecher & Bryana Corza
Intermission/Show Music:	Eli Stalzer & Mackin Carroll
Recorded Sound & Production Work:	Advanced Theatre Arts
Projection Operators:	Kareem Attia & Audrey Nguyen

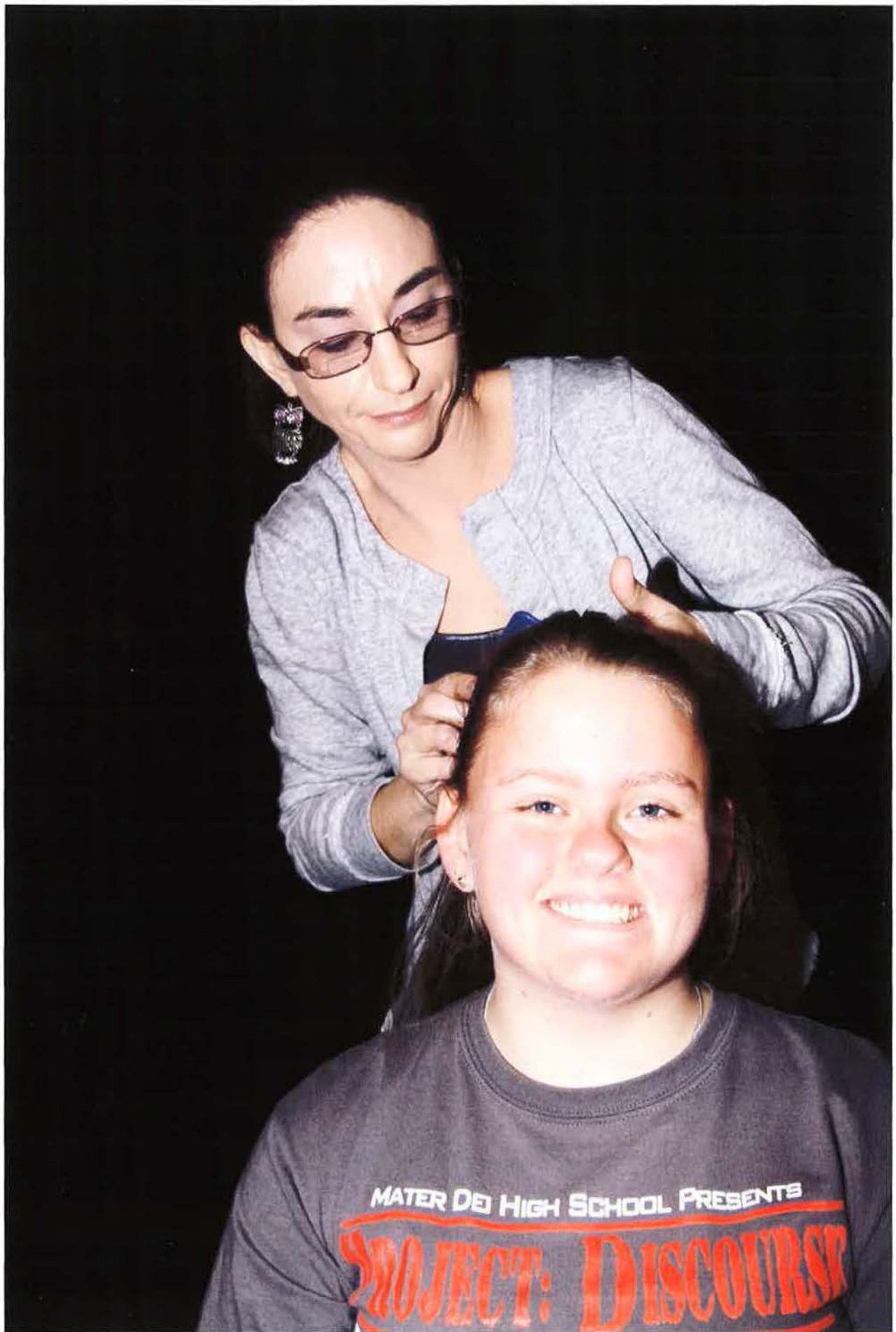
***This Play will have a 15 minute intermission
Facilities are located off of the LeVecke Center
Please turn off all electronics during the performance***

Setting of the Play:

**Various locations in Louisiana, 1984
Including Angola State Penitentiary**

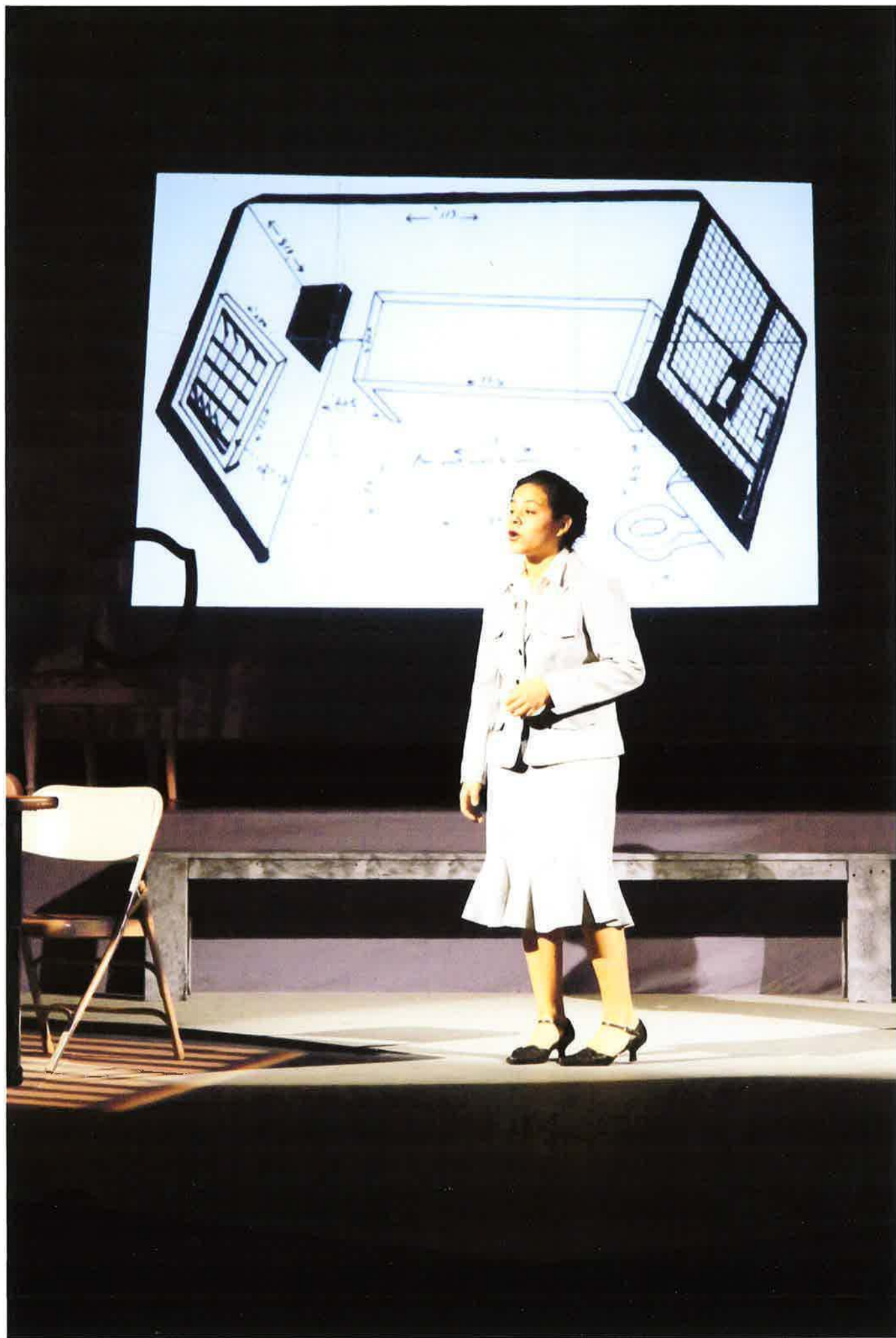






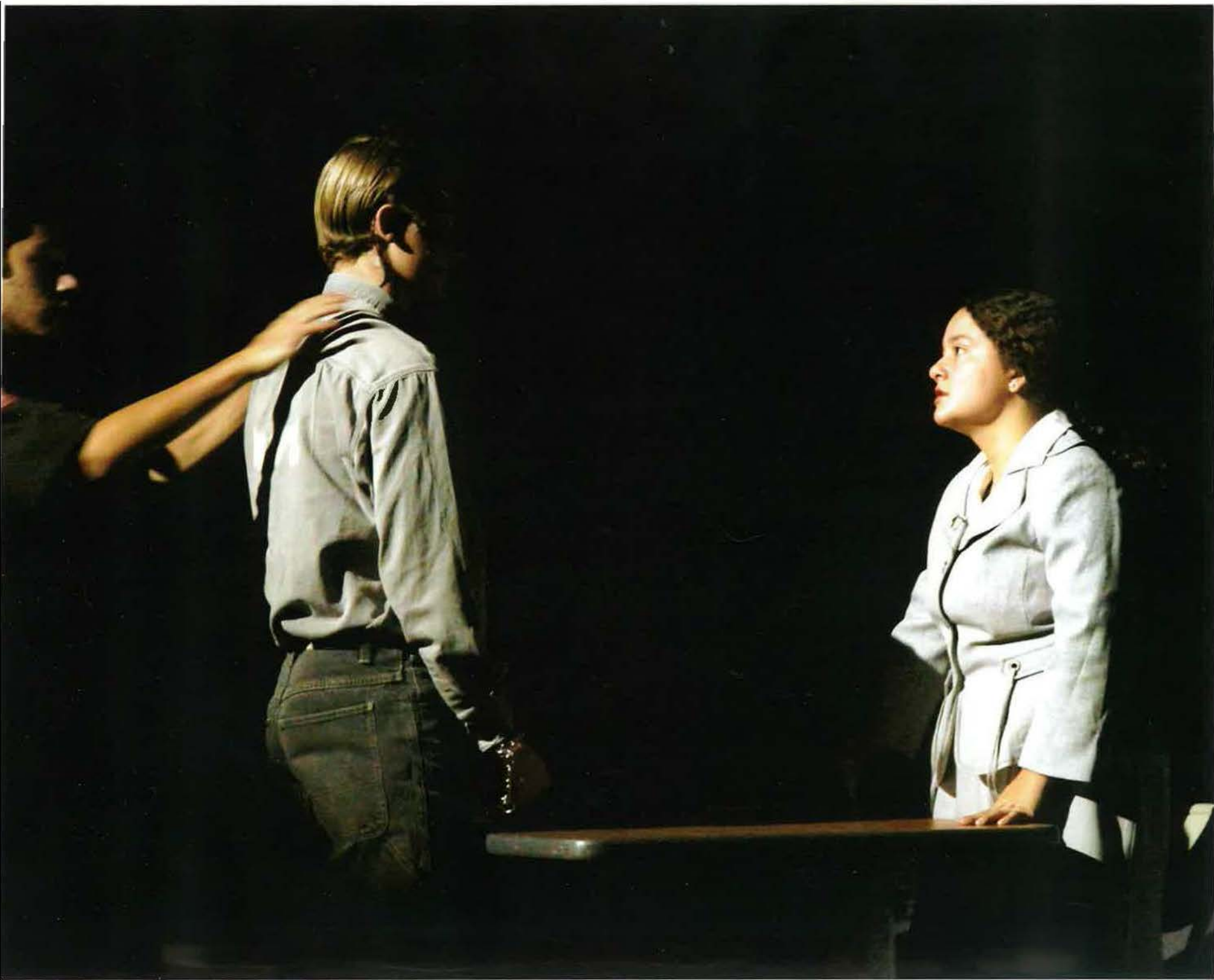










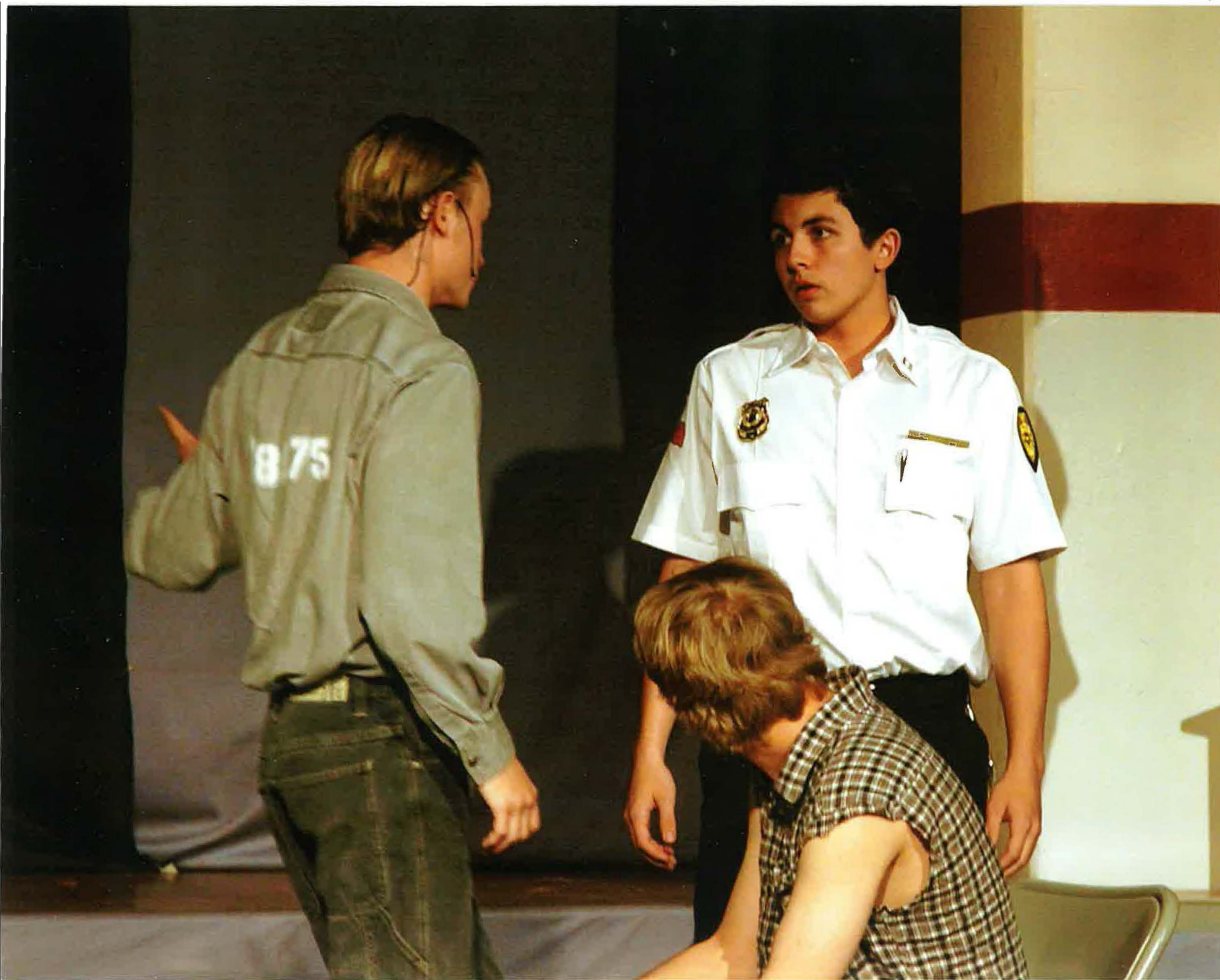






















State of California

Certificate of Honor

Presented To

MATER DEI HIGH SCHOOL

On behalf of the State of California, I congratulate Mater Dei High School for demonstrating excellence in theatre arts. Your students' exceptional talent brought you to California Youth in Theatre Day, a prestigious opportunity to showcase extraordinary accomplishments in the fine arts. Your invitation to perform reflects the school's undying dedication to promoting the arts within the community and encouraging theatrical excellence in youth.

I acknowledge and commend your tremendous degree of time and energy invested in theatre arts. These efforts are crucial in fostering artistic talent and expression, which is an invaluable service and contribution to California. I wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors.

***THEREFORE,** I have hereunto set
my hand and caused the Seal of the
State of California to be affixed.*



*Gavin Newsom
Lieutenant Governor*

Please note:

This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.

Williams, Patrick

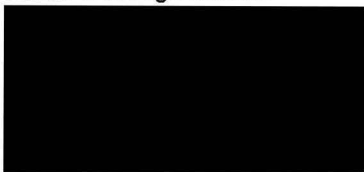
From: Clare, Frances**Sent:** Monday, November 28, 2011 1:38 PM**To:** Williams, Patrick**Cc:** Hickman, Kevin**Subject:** Project Discourse

Patrick,

Congratulations and commendations to you, faculty involved, and all Monarch Players, for an outstanding play, *Dead Man Walking* and surrounding Project Discourse. Without doubt, this was one of the best plays that I have attended at MDHS. The student-actors and actresses were so well rehearsed in their characters and they also appeared to enjoy their particular roles despite the difficult subject matter.

Thank you Patrick, for your outstanding work on this entire project and for all that you do for the students of MDHS.

Frances Clare
Principal
Mater Dei High School



Williams, Patrick

From: Murphy, Patrick
Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2011 9:10 AM
To: Williams, Patrick
Subject: Project Discourse Production of "Dead Man Walking"
Patrick,

I want to give you, Melanie Carrillo, Melissa Jacobson and the entire cast and crew of "Dead Man Walking" my absolute highest commendation and sincerest gratitude for the amazing work you all accomplished with this year's Project Discourse. The performance of ALL of the characters in this very difficult and extremely important production was incredible and you should ALL be justifiably proud of what you accomplished throughout the past week. However, as exceptional as the performances were, even more important was the impact that "Dead Man Walking" had on our entire campus, in terms of opening dialogue and opening minds to the important principles and ideals involved in this year's Project Discourse presentation. As President of Mater Dei High School, I am so proud to be associated with such an amazing production and with such an outstanding department you have created in the Theatrical Arts at MDHS. Please pass along my sincerest thanks and highest platitudes to ALL of those involved in the truly exceptional production of "Dead Man Walking". Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours.

Pat Murphy



CALIFORNIA EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION

C.E.T.A. Southern Region

Theatre Educates

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Outstanding Theatrical Work

Casey Brecher

Mater Dei High School

Arlene Hood
President CETA

January, 2012

Michael J. Despars
Coordinator, HSTF



CALIFORNIA EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION

C.E.T.A. Southern Region
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Outstanding Theatrical Work

Jackie Janowicz
Mater Dei High School

Arlene Hood
President CETA

January, 2012

Michael J. Despars
Coordinator, HSTF



CALIFORNIA EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION

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Theatre Educates

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Outstanding Theatrical Work

Veronica Valencia

Mater Dei High School

Arlene Hood
President CETA

January, 2012

Michael J. Despars
Coordinator, HSTF



CALIFORNIA EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION

C.E.T.A. Southern Region
Theatre Educates

Certificate of Achievement
Outstanding Theatrical Work

Mackin Carrol
Mater Dei High School

Arlene Hood
President CETA

January, 2012

Michael J. Despars
Coordinator, HSTF

2012 Orange County Cappies Nominees and Commendees

NOMINEES

MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

Wylie Simpson, San Juan Hills High School, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*

Kayla Eber, Erin Herndon, Mariah Murga, Matthew Norman, Mater Dei Catholic High School, *Dead Man Walking*

Steven Harrington, Todd Maginn, Natalie Gennaoui, Los Alamitos High School, *The Three Musketeers*

Chelsea Harvey, Fountain Valley High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*

Nhung Mai, Dave Vera, Tesoro High School, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

SOUND

Marisa DiCamillo, Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *The Diary of Anne Frank*

Kaiden Gerlach, San Juan Hills High School, *The Diviners*

Emma Hood, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*

Jordan Lockhart, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*

Lavance Reed, Orange Lutheran High School, *Our Town*

LIGHTING

Madeleine Bidmead, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *The Servant of Two Masters*

Tori Harris, Mark Roth, Newport Harbor High School, *The Diviners*

Morgan Lappi, Marcus Mathews, Tesoro High School, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Alex Noxsel, Jon Yarosko, Fullerton Union High School, *The Diviners*

Jason Welch, Christabelle Blake, Christina Perry, Eimi Thompson, Tri-School Theatre, *Seussical the Musical*

SETS

Nathan Auclair, Emily Chetney, Sean Goodwin, San Juan Hills High School, *The Diviners*

Maddy Carroll, James Ramirez, Sarah Wallace, Ryan Bangs, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*

Tyler Cass, Fullerton Union High School, *The Diviners*

Kristen Lazatin, Lindsey Lowy, Marcus Mathews, Nick Mestakides, Tesoro High School, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Kim Newman, Sarah Tang, Jenny Tran, Fountain Valley High School, *The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*

COSTUMES

Jordan-Marc Diamond, Olivia Ducharme, Jenna Lego, Monica Wilson, Huntington Beach Academy of the Performing Arts, *Our Town*

Grace Kim, Los Alamitos High School, *The Three Musketeers*

Amanda Lorge, Julie Michalek, Tesoro High School, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Julie Michalek, Tesoro High School, *Me and My Girl*

Jaclyn Stickel, Denise Madrigal, Cami Jacob, Felicia Garcia, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*

MAKE-UP

Katie Beliles, Tesoro High School, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Emily Chetney, San Juan Hills High School, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*

Katy Hall, Fullerton Union High School, *The Diviners*

Christine Nguyen, Tri-School Theatre, *Seussical the Musical*

David Schafer, Sierra Henderson, Morgan Fleming, Mady Saenz, Laguna Hills High School, *Into The Woods*

PROPS

Katie Clendening, Jamie Falcone, Los Alamitos High School, *The Three Musketeers*

Adam Dunford, Brandi Murphy, Kristin Causey, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*

Andrea Rodriguez, Katie Bowen, Bailey Bowen, Matthew Michalak, Tri-School Theatre, *Seussical the Musical*

Maryssa Spires, Mission Viejo High School, *Crazy For You*

Arina Wu, Tesoro High School, *Me and My Girl*

SPECIAL EFFECTS AND OR TECHNOLOGY

Sara Haddadin, Alex Perez, for Projections, Mission Viejo High School, *The Odyssey*

Wyatt Hopper, Emily Steward-Styffe, for Projections, Fullerton Union High School, *The Diviners*

Maddie Lousel, for Projections, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*

Justin Roth, Roman Curiel, Robert Gomez, Molly Pascale, for *Glow in the Dark Effects*, Tri-School Theatre, *Seussical the Musical*

Justin Roth, Madison Galligan, Dominic Grisotti, Joshua Van Driesan, for *The Dragon*, Tri-School Theatre, *The Hobbit*

STAGE CREW

Melissa Ballard, Leena Hughes, Alex Tita, Y-Nhu Tran, University High School, *Dames at Sea*

Sara Haddadin, Kristi Farley, Spencer Joseph, Jocelyn Romero, Mission Viejo High School, *Crazy For You*

Katrina Kimes, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*

Lauren Pace, Marcus Mathews, Tesoro High School, *Me and My Girl*

Madison Thissell, Kristina Cunningham, Hoang Nguyen, Fountain Valley High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*

ORCHESTRA

Brethren Christian High School, *Godspell*

Irvine High School, *The Boy Friend*

Fountain Valley High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*

Mission Viejo High School, *Crazy For You*

Northwood High School, *The Wizard of Oz*

CHOREOGRAPHY

Catie Beck, Alicia Glover, Fountain Valley High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*

Carlie Clippinger, Marisa Shimano, South Orange County School of the Arts at Dana Hills High School, *Sweet Charity*

Maddie Hill, Megan Hill, El Dorado High School, *Once On This Island*

Danielle Lizotte, sword fight, Los Alamitos High School, *The Three Musketeers*

Madeline Giles (both sides of the coin) , Hannah Jarvis (ballet), San Juan Hills High School, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*

CREATIVITY

Christina Braun, Megan Dorsey, for Aerial Dance, Mission Viejo High School, *The Odyssey*

Joseph Carpenter, Luis Ceballos, Max Monahan, Jacob Tompkins, for the Klezmer Band, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *The Servant of Two Masters*

Dawson Hoppes, for Video, Brethren Christian High School, *Godspell*

Ryan Lindebourg, for Sax Underscore, South Orange County School of the Arts at Dana Hills High School, *A Streetcar Named Desire*

Malek Sammour, for Banjo Composition, Fullerton Union High School, *The Diviners*

ENSEMBLE IN A PLAY

Resten and Alta, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*

The Cloisters, Laguna Hills High School, *The Curious Savage*

The Italians, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *The Servant of Two Masters*

The Mechanicals, Tesoro High School, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Clairee and Ouiser, Brethren Christian High School, *Steel Magnolias*

ENSEMBLE IN A MUSICAL

The Barricade, Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *Les Miserables*

The Cabinet, Esperanza High School, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*

Gangsters and Dolls, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*

The Gangsters, Fountain Valley High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*

The Follies Showgirls, Mission Viejo High School, *Crazy For You*

FEATURED ACTRESS IN A PLAY

Natalie Barbaresi, as Italian #3/Waiter, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *The Servant of Two Masters*

Hannah Betz, as Player/Girl in pink dress, Tesoro High School, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Madison Carroll, as Instructor, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*

Megan Deusenberry, as Attorney, Mater Dei Catholic High School, *Dead Man Walking*

Elena Perez, as Alice Blake, Costa Mesa High School, *Up the Down Staircase*

FEATURED ACTOR IN A PLAY

Alec Backhus, as Dewey Maples, San Juan Hills High School, *The Diviners*

Keenan Herdeg, as Peter Van Daan, Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *The Diary of Anne Frank*

Andres Batta II, as The Murderer, Fountain Valley High School, *The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*
Remi Kassarian, as Italian #2/Waiter, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *The Servant of Two Masters*
Jack Vogt, as Gollum, Tri-School Theatre, *The Hobbit*

FEATURED ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL

Nika Convertino, as Randolph, JSerra Catholic High School, *Bye Bye Birdie*
Courtney Hatch, as Tiny Tom, Costa Mesa High School, *Urinetown, the Musical*
Morgan Higgins, as the Usherette, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*
Megan Tran, as Singapore Sue, University High School, *Dames at Sea*
Lauren Wolcott, as Mrs. Harcourt, Fullerton Union High School, *Anything Goes*

FEATURED ACTOR IN A MUSICAL

Jacob Bergstrom, as Andrew Carnes, Orange Lutheran High School, *Oklahoma!*
Kaiden Gerlach, as The Deputy, San Juan Hills High School, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*
Jason Grillo, as The Butler, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Zachary Jones, as Underling, Fountain Valley High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Daniel Shadman, as Sir Jasper, Tesoro High School, *Me and My Girl*

FEMALE DANCER

Monica Alvarado, as Vlad Vladikoff, Anaheim High School, *Seussical The Musical*
Isabella Carracino, as the Tango Lead, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*
Courtney Mauss, as Patsy, Mission Viejo High School, *Crazy For You*
Julianne Ruck, as Janet van de Graff, Fountain Valley High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Marisa Shimano, as Helene, South Orange County School of the Arts at Dana Hills High School, *Sweet Charity*

MALE DANCER

Connor Courier, as Robert Martin, Fountain Valley High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Tanner Montierth, as Albert, Aliso Niguel High School, *Bye Bye Birdie*
Shane Satterfield, as George, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Dillon Steckbauer, as Bobby Child, Mission Viejo High School, *Crazy For You*
Conrad Wong, as Jesus, Brethren Christian High School, *Godspell*

FEMALE VOCALIST

Jennasea Bauserman, as Reno Sweeney, Fullerton Union High School, *Anything Goes*
Elle Grant, as Princess Puffer, San Juan Hills High School, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*
Melanie Overton, as Melanie (By My Side), Brethren Christian High School, *Godspell*
Hayley Smith, as Penelope Pennywise, Costa Mesa High School, *Urinetown, the Musical*
Veronica Thompson, as Fantine, Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *Les Miserables*

MALE VOCALIST

Matt Dallal, as Robbie Hart, Mater Dei Catholic High School, *The Wedding Singer*
Dolan Hall, as Black Fox, Esperanza High School, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*
Zachary Hillman, as Billy Crocker, Fullerton Union High School, *Anything Goes*
Dylan Kirkby, as Dick, University High School, *Dames at Sea*
Grant Yosenick, as Jean Valjean, Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *Les Miserables*

COMIC ACTRESS IN A PLAY

Kelsey Bartlett, as Ouiser, Brethren Christian High School, *Steel Magnolias*
Dani McMahan, as Norma Henshaw, Newport Harbor High School, *The Diviners*
Brandi Murphy, as Alta, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*
Veronique Poutre, as Mrs. Van Daan, Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *The Diary of Anne Frank*
Julianne Ruck, as Bernice Roth, Fountain Valley High School, *The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*

COMIC ACTOR IN A PLAY

Zachary Billetter, as Roger Hopewell, Fountain Valley High School, *The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*
Conor Burke, as Pantalone, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *The Servant of Two Masters*
Devon Maslyn, as Hannibal, Laguna Hills High School, *The Curious Savage*
Nick Mestakides, as Nick Bottom, Tesoro High School, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
Jacob Nash, as Miller, El Dorado High School, *The Canterbury Tales*

COMIC ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL

McKenna Bisaha, as Little Red Riding Hood, Laguna Hills High School, *Into The Woods*
Danielle Henry, as Danielle (Abraham), Brethren Christian High School, *Godspell*
Sarah Pierce, as Ado Annie Carnes, Orange Lutheran High School, *Oklahoma!*
Summer Rudas, as Little Sally, Costa Mesa High School, *Urinetown, the Musical*
Erica Schaeffer, as Mayzie La Bird, Tri-School Theatre, *Seussical the Musical*

COMIC ACTOR IN A MUSICAL

Matt Bain, as Lord Hubert Brockhurst, Irvine High School, *The Boy Friend*
Zach Nalezny, as Martin van Buren, Esperanza High School, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*
Christian Penuelas, as Aldolpho, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Saba Saghafi, as Freddy, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*
Christopher Smith, as Lord Evelyn Oakleigh, Fullerton Union High School, *Anything Goes*

SUPPORTING ACTRESS IN A PLAY

Elizabeth Bluth, as Emma, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*
Bryana Corza, as Sister Helen - Narrator, Mater Dei Catholic High School, *Dead Man Walking*
Katherine Schneider, as Clarice, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *The Servant of Two Masters*
Veronica Thompson, as Edith Frank, Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *The Diary of Anne Frank*
Hannah Whitfield, as Jennie-Mae Layman, Newport Harbor High School, *The Diviners*

SUPPORTING ACTOR IN A PLAY

Josh Aikin, as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Corona del Mar High School, *Amadeus*
Mackian Bauman, as Ferris Layman, San Juan Hills High School, *The Diviners*
Garrett Brown, as George Gibbs, Huntington Beach Academy of the Performing Arts, *Our Town*
Adam Dunford, as Resten, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*
Zachary Hillman, as C.C. Showers, Fullerton Union High School, *The Diviners*

SUPPORTING ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL

Gabby Jackson, as The Witch, Laguna Hills High School, *Into The Woods*
Sarah McGuire, as Gertrude McFuzz, Tri-School Theatre, *Seussical the Musical*
Brandi Murphy, as The Drowsy Chaperone, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Jazzi Roque, as Jazzi (skater girl), Brethren Christian High School, *Godspell*
Allison Sheppard, as Georgia Hendricks, Newport Harbor High School, *Curtains*

SUPPORTING ACTOR IN A MUSICAL

James Fuentes, as Robert Martin, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Reed Jones, as Jack, Laguna Hills High School, *Into The Woods*
Malek Sammour, as Moonface Martin, Fullerton Union High School, *Anything Goes*
Josiah Smith, as Jud Frey, Orange Lutheran High School, *Oklahoma!*
Daniel Velasquez, as Marius, Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *Les Miserables*

LEAD ACTRESS IN A PLAY

Jennifer Bishop, as Anne Frank, Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *The Diary of Anne Frank*
Gabby Jackson, as Mrs. Savage, Laguna Hills High School, *The Curious Savage*
Melanie Overton, as M'Lynn, Brethren Christian High School, *Steel Magnolias*
Jaclyn Stickel, as Mary, La Habra High School, *The Language Archive*
Lauren Wolcott, as Jennie Mae, Fullerton Union High School, *The Diviners*

LEAD ACTOR IN A PLAY

Michael Patrick Burrell, as the Stage Manager, Orange Lutheran High School, *Our Town*
Brian Call, as Buddy Layman, Newport Harbor High School, *The Diviners*
Zack Carlson, as The Stage Manager, Huntington Beach Academy of the Performing Arts, *Our Town*
Saba Saghafi, as Truffaldino, St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *The Servant of Two Masters*
Malek Sammour, as Buddy, Fullerton Union High School, *The Diviners*

LEAD ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL

Madeline Giles, as Chairwoman Wilhelmina Cartwright, San Juan Hills High School, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*
Kelsey Jones, as Laurey, Orange Lutheran High School, *Oklahoma!*
Natalie Leonard, as Ti Moune, El Dorado High School, *Once On This Island*

Jaclyn Stickel, as Janet van de Graaf, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Erin Theodorakis, as Sally Smith, Tesoro High School, *Me and My Girl*

LEAD ACTOR IN A MUSICAL

Zachary Billetter, as Man in Chair, Fountain Valley High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Michael Patrick Burrell, as Curly, Orange Lutheran High School, *Oklahoma!*
Grant Hodges, as The Cat in the Hat, Tri-School Theatre, *Seussical the Musical*
Jordan Lockhart, as Man in Chair, La Habra High School, *The Drowsy Chaperone*
Nick Mestakides, as Bill Snibson, Tesoro High School, *Me and My Girl*

SONG

"I Dreamed a Dream", Santa Margarita Catholic High School, *Les Miserables*
"I Got Rhythm", Mission Viejo High School, *Crazy For You*
"All About Ruprecht", St. Margaret's Episcopal School, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*
"By My Side", Brethren Christian High School, *Godspell*
"The Lambeth Walk", Tesoro High School, *Me and My Girl*

PLAY

Amadeus, Corona del Mar High School
The Language Archive, La Habra High School
The Diviners, Fullerton Union High School
The Servant of Two Masters, St. Margaret's Episcopal School
Our Town, Huntington Beach Academy of the Performing Arts

MUSICAL

The Drowsy Chaperone, La Habra High School
Les Miserables, Santa Margarita Catholic High School
Oklahoma!, Orange Lutheran High School
Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, St. Margaret's Episcopal School
Crazy For You, Mission Viejo High School

FRESHMAN CRITIC

Rebecca Maehara, Huntington Beach Academy of the Performing Arts
Megan McCarthy, University High School
Liam McGregor, St. Margaret's Episcopal School
Sohrob Nayebaziz, South Orange County School of the Arts at Dana Hills High School
Reese Ravner, San Juan Hills High School
Sabrina Thompson, Pacifica High School

SOPHOMORE CRITIC

Samantha Kelley, South Orange County School of the Arts at Dana Hills High School
Alexandra Kramer, University High School
Ryan Rogers, Los Alamitos High School
Stephen Stanec, Huntington Beach Academy of the Performing Arts
Nikki Tran, Fountain Valley High School

JUNIOR CRITIC

Shannon Annarella, Tri-School Theatre Theatre
Jacqueline Devereaux, Orange Lutheran High School
Katie Gaitan, Mater Dei Catholic High School Catholic High School
Gwen Thomas, South Orange County School of the Arts at Dana Hills High School
Grant Yosenick, Santa Margarita Catholic High School

SENIOR CRITIC

Najet Fazai, St. Margaret's Episcopal School
Lindsay Fiorentino, South Orange County School of the Arts at Dana Hills High School
Bryan Hefner, Tesoro High School
Marisa Shimano, South Orange County School of the Arts at Dana Hills High School
Rosie Toumanian, Fountain Valley High School

CRITICS' TEAM

Fountain Valley High School

South Orange County School of the Arts at Dana Hills High School

St. Margaret's Episcopal School

Tesoro High School

University High School

COMMEDEES**Aliso Niguel High School**

Jake Buck

Andrea Cahhal

Elyse Johnson

Victoria Vandelinde

Anaheim High School

Jennifer Almeida

Alex Campos

Ashley Herrera

Renee Sampang

Brea Olinda High School

none

Brethren Christian High School

Hannah Dunning

Katie Glavinic

Kate Jensen

Michelle Santa

Corona del Mar High School

none

Costa Mesa High School

Adriana Rodriguez

Rachel Russell

Hayley Smith

Rachel Witter

El Dorado High School

Summer Equitz

Amber Guttilla

Sarah Klenha

Andrea Miller

Esperanza High School

Amanda Brown

Dolan Hall

Emily Klemmetsen

Bernadette Raichel

Fountain Valley High School

Zachary Billetter

DJ Canas

Robyn Couch

Ally Fiallo

Fullerton Union High School

Elise Cruz
Evona Markanian
Christie Owens
Chloe Rodriguez

Huntington Beach Academy of the Performing Arts

Sarah Ashley
Tori Beringer
Alex Jean
Marilee Jooste

Irvine High School

none

John F Kennedy High School

none

JSerra Catholic High School

Nika Convertino
Brendan Lank
Gianna Meaglia
Sharon Tangolics

La Habra High School

Nicole Wheeler

Laguna Hills High School

Collette Astle
Jonah Buckels
Keana Cowden
Kendra Womack

Los Alamitos High School

none

Marina High School

none

Mater Dei Catholic High School

Casey Brecher
Joanna Cornejo
Kendra Hennegen
Alexa Vellanoweth

Mission Viejo High School

Matt Beauchamp
Zane Folta
KJ Mowery
Emily Young

Newport Harbor High School

Maddie Decter
Keach Siriani-Madden
Kenzie Stephens
Nijel Thames

Northwood High School

none

Please note: Multiple signatures were added to this page, which is a copy of the front cover of the project. This whole page has been redacted for privacy concerns.

Mater Dei's 'Dead Man' is a breakout success

By [AMANDA WEXLER](#)

2011-11-21 11:12:50

Why do we kill people who kill people to show killing people is wrong? Mater Dei's high school production of "Dead Man Walking" surrounds the idea that love conquers all and the controversy over the legality as well as the morality of the death penalty.

As the curtain rises we find ourselves in a quaint Louisiana town in 1984. Opening the show as her present day self, Sister Helen Prejean, Bryana Corza, provides the background of the rest of the show and sets the mood for the performance. As the story unravels we experience the heartfelt and emotional, life-and-death battle of a man on death row in the Angola State Penitentiary.

Portraying the felon Matt Poncelet, Casey Brecher exudes a tough guy persona while still exemplifying vulnerability in his fear of dying and losing everything he knows. With his southern drawl and hard drawn face Brecher emanates the stereotypical Southern man. Brecher's bold gestures and strong vocal inflection prove powerful in his enthralling and heart tugging performance.

Matt Dallal depicts the perfect image of a concerned father. As Earl Delacroix, Dallal radiates parental love and demonstrates the struggle of losing a child. Restraining tears and clenching fists, Dallal engenders a heart warming performance through frustrated facial expression and exasperated vocal inflection.

Special recognition goes to Megan Deussenberry as Matt Poncelet's lawyer Hilton Barber. Exuding intelligence and strength Deussenberry delineates the struggle of the ever controversial Poncelet and projects the confidence of an independent and hard working woman.

Mater Dei goes above and beyond in creating a strong background for the show, projecting statistics of real court cases and photographs of different locations within the show. The cast and crew create a vivid image of this 1984 Louisiana city.

Mater Dei's publicity team excels far beyond anyone's expectations. Through postcards and posters designed and created by the students with beautiful and thought-provoking dimension, Mater Dei engenders wide spread awareness of their show and instills a longing to see this fine and upstanding production.

With a devoted cast and crew, Mater Dei produces a captivating performance of this well loved show and proves that love never fails.

Amanda Wexler is a junior at Mission Viejo High School in Mission Viejo.

Execution is in the air at Mater Dei

By [JOSIAH SMITH](#)

2011-11-21 11:12:53

Mater Dei's "Dead Man Walking" takes you on the journey of a convict sentenced to death and the nun who is willing to console him throughout the process.

The elder Sister Helen Prejean (Bryanna Corza) begins the show alone yet shows strength in her subtle hand movements and strong stance upon the stage. As she narrates the play she shows weakness, strength and emotion through her voice fluctuations and her presence on stage.

The younger Sister Helen Prejean (Joanna Cornejo) also shows emotion throughout the play, helping guide Matt Poncelet (Casey Brecher) through the process of facing the death penalty.

Brecher's presence onstage is a commanding one, with sharp precise movements continuously showing his criminal side. As he shows his weaker, more vulnerable side to Sister Helen, he makes it not only believable, but relatable to many different areas in life. His strength leads the show and allows many cast members to join him on this incredible journey.

One of the boys Poncelet killed had a father by the name of Earl Delacroix. Matt Dallal portrays Earl with great fierceness, vulnerability and anger towards Poncelet. Not only does he do this, but he makes it truly believable.

Along with the great cast, the Marketing, Publicity and special effects were also well thought out and well done. The meaning behind many of the things, such as posters and the slideshow, were very methodical and meaningful. They show throughout that the cast and crew as a whole put a lot of time and effort into this fantastic production.

The Cast as a whole did a great job putting on this production and continuously engaged and educated those who watched. Mater Dei put on a show that will never be forgotten.

Josiah Smith is a senior at Orange Lutheran in Orange.

CALIFORNIA EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION
HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE FESTIVAL
EVALUATION RESPONSE SHEET

SCHOOL: Mater Dei High School

PLAY: *Dead Man Walking*

DAY & DATE OF ATTENDANCE: Tuesday, November 22, 2011 at 7:30 pm

ADJUDICATOR: Ruthie Romano

OVERALL RATING (1-100): 94 (Acting – 54, Technical – 40)

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT:

1. Joanna Cornejo (Sister Helen Prejean)
2. Bryana Corza (Sister Helen Prejean)
3. Casey Brecher (Matt Poncelet)
4. Megan Deussenberry (Hilton Barber)
5. Matt Dallal (Earl Delacroix)
6. Jacob Debilio (Clyde Percy)

Mater Dei High School's production of *Dead Man Walking* included tough material for any school to handle. The cast of *Dead Man Walking* did an excellent job bringing this story to life. Casey Brecher, playing Matt Poncelet, handled a character that faces tough decisions many do not talk about. However, his delivery was cold and chilling making you believe for some time that he was a murderer. With a show that is so dark, many characters helped brighten the show up. Joanna Cornejo and Bryana Corza, both playing Sister Helen Prejean, worked well together as one narrated while the other was "in the moment." The compassion of Sister Helen Prejean was really expressed well, particularly by Joanna Cornejo. The tension her character was there, but

also could have been a little clearer. Although the entire cast worked well together as an ensemble on stage, it is important to keep remembering that you must work with your scene partners to keep the energy going. The entire show will tell the story, not just particular lines. Keep the energy and emotion going throughout the show. Although the cast was wearing microphones, the actors need to remember to project constantly.

The technical elements of Mater Dei High School's *Dead Man Walking* worked well for the show. The chain link set up to help enclose the seating area helped set the tone for the show. It gives the sense of security, authority, and the idea that you are being watched. The set and lighting design worked for the show giving us key parts of the various places. The costumes and make-up design were planned and executed well fitting with the play. The use of the projected PowerPoint slides was really effective for this production. It helped increase the audiences' interest in the subject matter as well as educate the audience on the background of the material.

Overall, Mater Dei High School did an excellent job of tackling such a current, controversial, and emotionally charged topic. The students connected to a show that may not be easy to relate to at such a young age. There were also many emotional moments that the cast handled with such grace. The scene with Matt Poncelet's mom and her sons was wonderful. The emotions were raw and moving for the audience. I would have liked the guard to take more time with the line of "dead man walking." That is only time the title of the show is said and it is such an iconic moment for the show. The blocking for this show was effective and created nice stage pictures. However, the actors need to remember that there is intention behind every action and it is their job, as an actor, to bring any story to life with that intention.

SCHOOL: Mater Dei High School
PLAY: Dead Man Walking
DATE OF ATTENDANCE: November 23, 2011
ADJUDICATOR: Colleen Wilson
TECHNICAL RATING (1-40): 37
ACTING AND PRODUCTION RATING (1-60): 57
OVERALL RATING COMBINED (1-100): 94

Part One: Acting

The acting in this production was extremely focused and by the end the actors really pulled on the audiences' heart strings. Casey Brecher who played Matt Poncelet, the convicted murderer, was very believable by the end of the show touched everyone's hearts. I thought he spoke a bit too quickly in the first act but when he finally broke down in his monolog about death, it was very disturbing and haunting. He set the stakes very high for his character and he had a great variety switching from his hard exterior to his begging for forgiveness throughout the course of the show. His character was dangerous, bold, touching and tragic. He listened very well on stage and he never played the ending too soon. He kept the audience on their toes the entire time with his hard demeanor so his build up to the breakdown was even more effective. He developed a convincing and touching relationship with his spiritual counselor, Sister Helen Prejean. Joanna Cornejo (Sister Helen Prejean) had great confidence in her physicality but also appeared fragile when she spoke of how lonely her character was. She took her moment before and during the scene to create the atmosphere around her, especially in the scene where they were in the rain. She did need more commitment in her voice and the stakes needed to be higher in the scene when she wanted so desperately to see Matt after she fainted in the prison. She carried the plot well with the help of Bryana Corza

who also had a confident stage presence and great enunciation and projection. Other standouts included Jackie Janowicz (Lucille Poncelet) who created a clear, loving relationship with Matt and took her time delivering her monologs, she used the pauses well. Kendra Hennegen (Sister Marie Augusta Neal) also listened very well and had clear tactics. Matt Dallal (Earl Delacroix) had a clear, believable dialect and spoke nice and slow. He also used a variety of tactics to get what he wanted from Sister Prejean. He had clear objectives and he built the scene very well. Jacob DeBilio and Veronica Valencia (Mr and Mrs. Percy) had a nice build to the climax of their scene with Sister Prejean. They both listened well and had clear relationships with each other and with Sister Prejean. I thought Mackin Carrol (Warden Hartman) was believable, had a variety tactics and listened well. The scene with Matt's brothers and him created a nice moment of laughter which was much needed and their relationships were believable and sad. Overall, I thought the actors needed a bit more energy and drive, even though the story was dramatic. I would have liked to see the ensemble create a variety of characters and have more urgency in their movements, especially as all of the reporters.

Part Two: Technical Design

The stage was a thrust into the center with the audience on two sides which created a couple of obstacles. I couldn't see the actors very well without craning my neck because the audience members were on one plane and not raised. The minimal set of benches, tables and chairs was suitable for the barren, bleak appearance of the prison. The costumes were appropriate for the time period and the devout people of the South. The screen with the images projecting onto it was effective and created powerful messages

that made the audience think. The lighting was appropriate for the location; fluorescent, bright lighting during the prison scenes and a warm yellow for the scene inside of homes. The signs that the residents of the community were holding were effective and powerful with words like "Eye for an eye" and "Death to the Murderer." The music choice was interesting and eerie as Mad World played and transitioned into Kumbaya after the parents tell stories of their kid's murders in the therapy session scene. The use of live piano and guitar was a nice addition as well.

Part Three: The Production

Overall, this production was heartbreaking and thought provoking. The lead actors were very believable and the technical aspects were very appropriate for the setting of the story. Combined, they created a haunting and authentic atmosphere.

Mater Dei High School

Dead Man Walking

November 19th 2011

Joshua Robert Nelson

Technical Rating:

Acting and Production Rating

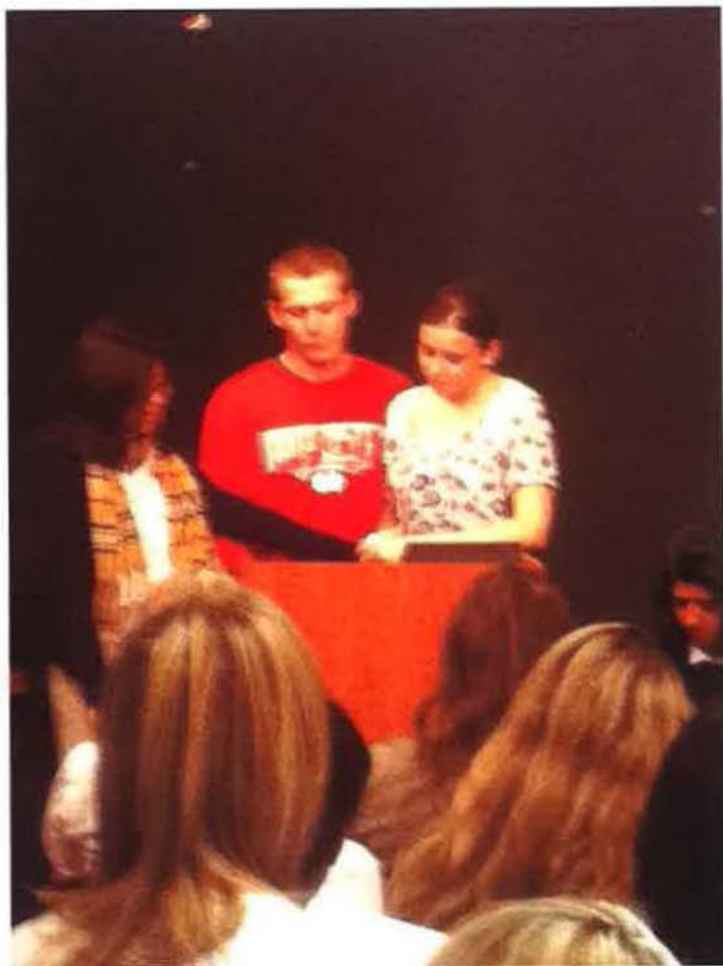
Overall Rating Combined: 72

Mater Dei High Schools Production of Dead Man Walking was a great choice to help impact the student body as a whole and get them thinking about social issues. As a cast in its entirety I thought they worked together well. I thought that the actors could have put more emphasis on the importance of what they were saying. It was not important enough to the characters. There were a few characters who seemed to need some more comprehension of the body of work and the lines they had been given. Also as a whole the cast could have used more energy in everything they did. The Actresses playing Sister Helen Prejean (Bryana Corza & Joanna Cornejo) both had definite characters and the inflections of their lines seemed well thought out and appropriate for each situation. Casey Brecher, who played Matt Poncelet, had a few awkward character choices. His Dialect came in and out through the show and he didn't raise the stakes. He did not make us believe that his life was actually on the line.

The technical aspects of the show were mixed for me. The lighting was very harsh and it came on and off. There seemed to be no in between effects. There was the same sort of thing with the light colors it was either bright white or bright blue. In some

scenes the lights were late or at least they seemed to come in a bit late to the audience. The set was well thought out and executed nicely. Before the show there was live music which was nice to hear my only issue with it was that the music did not contribute to the ambiance of the show. The costumes in the show were all good and executed well. The Warden of the show did have his cell phone in his front right pocket though through the second act.

The staging of the show was a bit odd at times. Sometimes the actors would upstage themselves and literally speak their lines turned away from the audience. I also did not understand exactly why the actors walked to certain spots and waited to speak till they got there. The staging seemed very presentational it did not come off organic to the audience. The pace of the show was a tad slow. The actors took some time with the scenes which I would usually applaud the effort but it seemed a bit too slow at times. Overall Mater Dei High School's Production had a strong message and was a touching show.





Samples of Process Drama Edmodo Journals – 1st Person Character Response

Prompt:

From the perspective of your character, reflect about the process drama press conference.

Darby Campbell

Turned in Nov 9, 2011 10:22 AM

I'm not religious but I do have my morals and I try to think about what everyone feels and not the one person. It may be hard to forgive a man but it won't kill you if you don't. What doesn't kill you will only make you stronger. This family suffered but at the same time the murderer's family must be in pain also. They lost their daughter but his family will soon lose their son if this death penalty goes through. There are more people affected than themselves and until they realize that I'm afraid they'll hate me for what I'll say and stay self centered in this kind of struggle between loss and hate. I'm going to have to say something so I'll stand during questions and take this tape off my mouth. I don't know if I can hold the silence any longer.

Joanna Cornejo

Turned in Nov 9, 2011 10:22 AM

I've never been involved with anything like this before. Being only 22 I thought it was so sad seeing these young girls and people having to go through a loss like this. I've never felt passionate about the death penalty but for the first time, I wanted justice to be served and this man executed. The people who are against the death penalty are only looking at facts and can't see the other people's perspective and how they might find peace within themselves. It really opened my eyes and made me feel for the death penalty even more.

Kendra Hennegen

Turned in Nov 9, 2011 10:36 AM

Yesterday, November 7th, I attended a press conference for the family of the recently murdered Laura Milsbaugh. I went as the spokesperson for Justice For All. I've been a member of this organization for seven years and I am the current head of the Alabama chapter. I believe in the use of the death penalty, not for the continuance of violence, but because it is a proven deterrence and is necessary for the safety of society. I think the press conference went really well. I was able to voice my group's beliefs and show our support for the Milsbaugh family. Anti death penalty activists attended as well, but all remained peaceful.

Olivia Obermeyer

As a mother, losing a child is unexplainable. the feeling that are going through me are feelings in have never felt before. She was my first born daughter that had such a beautiful future. Knowing my girl, she would want to know that her murder is found and behind bars. Her father on the other hand wants him to die. I don't know if she would go that far but I know it will bring us, as a family, closure. Everyday will make it easier to get our lives back together but we will never get our lovely daughter back and for that, Rick needs to pay.

David Thompson

Turned in Nov 9, 2011 10:23 AM

As the father of Laura, I have many emotions running through me. Sadness, despair, hope, and anger all mixed in my mind and heart. Although I respect both sides of the argument, I think my feelings will not change on the matter. No matter how I feel, what I say or what I do, nothing can bring back my daughter. The only thing I have to look forward to is the execution of mr. Sherman. I am glad however this case was brought out into the public so all of her friends and family can recognize what a beautiful person she was.

**Me to Advanced Theatre Arts**

Please journal about two of the following prompts and submit to Edmodo:

1. Have you gained an appreciation for the Sister of St. Joseph?
2. Will Project: Discourse help our student population support the theatre program more?
3. Have you had growth in the areas of stage confidence, cahracterization building and/or story telling skills? How? describe.
4. How can our theatre program inspire others ot make a difference in the world?
5. In regards to our show, how is "anything possible with a little bit of imagination and some teamwork"?

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Nov 18, 2011 | [Reply](#) | [Share](#) | [Tag ▾](#)

**Me to Advanced Theatre Arts****Press Conference Refelction (1st Person)****Turned in (30)****DUE: Nov 10, 2011**

From the perspective of your character, reflect about the process drama press conference.

Nov 9, 2011 | [Reply](#) | [Tag ▾](#)

Student Learning Goals – Student Edmodo Responses 11/23/2011

Me to Advanced Theatre Arts

Please journal about two of the following prompts and submit to Edmodo:

1. Have you gained an appreciation for the Sister of St. Joseph?
2. Will Project: Discourse help our student population support the theatre program more?
3. Have you had growth in the areas of stage confidence, characterization building and/or story telling skills? How? describe.
4. How can our theatre program inspire others to make a difference in the world?
5. In regards to our show, how is "anything possible with a little bit of imagination and some teamwork"?

Joanna Cornejo

Turned in Nov 21, 2011 2:27 PM

2) I do think that project discourse will help bring support to the theatre program. I think people have this image of theatre and don't think that it will be good, but especially with the forums, they see that it isn't something pointless but something they can relate to to a certain extent. Through project:discourse people will respect theatre and the work we put in.

3) I have grown immensely through this play. I think one of the hardest things was actually defining a character because there is a lot of me in sister Helen Prejean. I had to make sure it wasn't just me reacting to the situations but the character Sister Helen. Through this play I also learned how impactful theatre can be to an audience. I have never noticed how affected people are by the play until this play. Because of this I feel motivated to be the best that I can be at every performance and have my emotion reach the audience.

Anaïs Chilvers

Turned in Nov 21, 2011 11:27 PM

1. Yes, I have gained a deep appreciation for the Sisters of St. Joseph because of all the work they have done and still do to help those in need, especially inmates who are in prison for the crimes they have done. I think I truly gained a respect for the Sisters when we had an actual sister come talk to us at the religion discussion. What they do is truly amazing and takes courage and they inspire me to want to make a change in the world. Hearing about what they do makes me want to do the same, I want to help those who are in prison. I don't know if ever actually will but it's an idea.

2. I think that Project Discourse will help our student body become more involved and have respect for theatre because they participate in it in class, at the forums, and by actually going to see the play. This years play has been quite extraordinary and everyone has done such a good job with it. The acting was truly amazing and believable and I saw audience members actually crying. I think that anyone who went to the forum was motivated to see the play and hopefully will want to go see more plays or become involved in them even.

3. I think I've grown in confidence from being in this play. Every play I've been in gives me more confidence and stronger acting skills. I didn't actually do much in this play but I gave it my best and I also grew closer to other actors and made more friendships.

4. I think it can inspire people to go out and change the world because the plays really open up people's eyes to see what actually happens in the real world and it motivates them to want to make a change and have an impact on society.

5. Anything is possible with imagination and teamwork because that is what caused our play to come together and be amazing and inspiring and wonderful. We use our imaginations to bring our characters to life and also to improvise and problem solve during performances. Teamwork is the glue that holds us together and we work as a whole to make things happen.

Kareem Attia

Turned in Nov 30, 2011 6:50 PM

I have grown in the areas of Stage Confidence and Characterization. I remember in the beginning of DMW I had no idea what I was doing with my character. At one rehearsal I finally realized, I'm not sad, I'm mad. I am angry at the justice system. And I finally brought that out in my voice, action, and "look" on stage. I also used to be nervous when I ever entered into a space, once I had my character down, I could enter, with no problem, and feel what my character felt and be my character. It was Ana amazing experience.

Discourse can definitely get the students population involved and support out theatre program. I mean after all forums, all the class talks about it, lots had an interest in what the topics were. We sold out our closing night because of this! And this is proof that discourse and can get out students population to come see shows.

Jacob DeBilio

Turned in Nov 18, 2011 8:53 PM

2. I think Project: Discourse has definitely helped the student body appreciate theatre more. Just in this play alone I have seen an immense amount of respect grow throughout the student body. It's truly an exciting thing to see.

4. Our theatre program can help people make a difference because it can cause people to think even about things that are uncomfortable or controversial. If we can get students to think then we can change the future.

Emma Faulkner

Turned in Nov 29, 2011 8:08 PM

2. Will project discourse help our student body appreciate theatre more?

I think it has had a huge impact on the student body. Most kids don't understand theater, or it's potential at least. Some don't even care to know about it. Dead man walking really opened their eyes to what theatre can do. pretty much every department on campus found a way to incorporate dead man walking topics In their curriculum. We had guest speakers and every students saw a small forum of the play, This was no longer just another show we were putting on, but a spark of discussion about a topic that is sometimes overlooked by teens. Most teens didn't know how impacting a play could be.

5. In regards to the show, how Is anything possible with a little imagination and some team work? That is just something an actor should be ready for at all times. The actors job is to tell a story, once he or she is given a character the rest is up to you. Dead man walking was a true story, based on true people. The imagination is limitless and a necessary tool. Once we have established our characters, and the way they exist, it's time to work together. Each person is a member of a whole, and must contribute to make it work. That's one of the reasons why the show was so successful!

Brandon Gonzalez

Turned in Nov 21, 2011 4:20 PM

Yes I have gained an appreciation for the Sister of St. Joseph because when she went to talk to the boy who attacked the other boy in the chapel, she was not there out of anger towards the commotion he caused in the chapel. She was there because of the look of rage in the boy's eyes. She wanted to talk to the boy to find out the reasons for his actions before judging him on his worst act.

I believe Project Discourse will help our student population support the theatre program more because it hits issues that teens are drawn to yet not always exposed to. Project Discourse not only hits strong, social and ethical topics but at the same gives the Mater Dei student body a chance to see what theatre at Mater Dei is all about.

Caitlan Guillen

Turned in Nov 20, 2011 11:36 PM

Question: Will project discourse help our student population support the theatre program more?
- I believe that it will because when we apply project discourse, we are allowing students to be part of a conversation they can have with each other. That way, they can talk and get more interested in a topic and decide to explore on it more, which includes seeing a play or reading a book for interpretation.

Question: In regards to our show, how is "anything possible with a little bit of imagination and

some teamwork?"

- In regards to Dead Man Walking, I believe that we tell a story through our imagination. For instance, we were unable to set up metal bars for Poncelet's cell, but through the imagination of the guards, we believed that we were in a prison with prisoner cells. With teamwork, we could portray the "Kumbaya/First Execution" scene with ease. If we all believe that we are standing outside a prison while a man inside is executed, then the audience is right there believing with us as well.

Derrick Huynh

Turned in Nov 18, 2011 1:51 PM

2. Not only does Project Discourse help the student population support theatre, it helps them develop a mature appreciation for dramatic theatre if they are able to see an insightful and serious play. Project Discourse also creates an environment of communication on the topic of the play, spreading the word of the theatre program and its ability to make the audience think.

4. In the theatre program, the audience has the opportunity to view the situation in the many ways the director wishes to portray it. This causes the audience to reflect on how they feel about the subject as well. Once they have discovered and established their viewpoint, they tell others about their perspective during a conversation and urge others to do the same.

Caitlin Mathias

Turned in Nov 29, 2011 10:37 AM

4. How can our theatre program inspire others to make a difference in the world?

I believe that theatre can invoke such strong emotions that could inspire people to think about the world we live in and then feel deeply enough about those issues to want to change the world. This play has stirred up a lot of emotions for me about family and life and has made me think about the death penalty and what I believe. It's opened my eyes to issues more than just the execution of a criminal, such as where does the killing stop and what happens to the family before and after the execution.

5. In regards to our show, how is "anything possible with a little bit of imagination and some teamwork"?

I believe that our show achieved the impossible. In the beginning I didn't think that we could pull off such an influential and serious play. Our leads and everyone in the cast touched the hearts of many through their story telling ability and the raw emotions that they were able to portray. I thought the idea of getting the whole school involved was really cool but I didn't think that it could happen. It was amazing how in almost every class, no matter the subject, the teacher incorporated the issues of Dead Man Walking into their lessons. I personally loved the play and thought it was amazing even before our first show, but I didn't believe that my fellow peers would enjoy it too because of the serious topic. The amount of support and attendance surprised me, but made me really happy that high school kids could actually love such a serious play.

Audrey Nguyen
Turned in Jan 4, 2012 5:50 PM

I believe that project discourse will help our student population to support our theatre programs more. Project Discourse has made our student population think more and learn from a specific subject we present in project discourse. They take what they know and develop their thoughts into an even more better idea, a theory. Our student body can take what they've learn and grow from it as they might even use this lesson in real life. It changes their thought process and helps them learn a more real life situation.

Our theatre program can inspire others around the world and because of that they can make a difference. The work that we we do and perform can change their perspective of the world. They could be inspired to follow us and perform in theatre too. It can change their own thoughts on various subjects that's going on in the world right now. As every person can have a different perspective, their perspective can change the world.

Monique Nguyen
Turned in Dec 1, 2011 7:46 PM

1. The mission statement of the Sisters of St. Joseph says that they “embrace God’s values” and work towards unity in our world, justice for all, and helping those in great need of it. They have taught the value of human life and given comfort to the condemned. They have so much strength, to go on and help those in need. Even though they run the risk of being harassed by others.

2. I think that Project: Discourse will help the student body support the theatre program. By involving the current play in their curriculum, they must think about the topic. They won’t just have to see the play, but they would have to analyze and actually ponder the theme. They start to grow attached to the discussion and welcome the idea of seeing the play, if the class work was well-planned and interesting.

Sabrina Nuno
Turned in Nov 21, 2011 9:35 AM

1. Have you gained an appreciation for the Sister of St. Joseph?
I think I haves gained an appreciation for the sister and the work that they do and how sacrificial they have been.

2. Will Project: Disocurse help our student population support the theatre program more?
I think that with project discourse having such intense topics shown by such talented students and shows people what the power of theatre is.

3. Have you had growth in the areas of stage confidence, characterization building and/or story telling skills? How? describe.

I think that working on this show has improved my focus and my view points and made me a stronger actress and it has helped me in stage confidence and being able to channel my feelings and emotions and use it to tell the audience a story.

4. How can our theatre program inspire others to make a difference in the world?

I think by informing students who are unaware of the realities of our society can inspire people to go out and make a difference.

5. In regards to our show, how is "anything possible with a little bit of imagination and some teamwork"?

I think with the teamwork of the cast members we have been able to pull off a great show and be serious even though we are all known for being crazy and silly

Eli Stalzer

Turned in Dec 5, 2011 11:54 AM

I gained a lot of respect for Sister Prejean. I never thought of a nun being able to have such a presence in the political world. Her voice and message reached out to everyone and I witnessed hundreds of students believe in her message

**Me to Advanced Theatre Arts****Next Project: Discourse**

Turned In (26)

DUE: Nov 22, 2011

Please write a paragraph about what topic should be the next Project: Discourse. Why that topic? How will our Mater Dei community benefit from learning about this topic? What plays address this topic?

Nov 21, 2011 | [Reply](#) | [Tag](#) ▾**Me to Advanced Theatre Arts****Please submit your Journals here**

Turned In (16)

DUE: Nov 18, 2011

See previous post for the journal prompts.

Nov 18, 2011 | [Reply](#) | [Tag](#) ▾**Me to Advanced Theatre Arts**

Please journal about two of the following prompts and submit to Edmodo:

1. Have you gained an appreciation for the Sister of St. Joseph?
2. Will Project: Discourse help our student population support the theatre program more?
3. Have you had growth in the areas of stage confidence, characterization building and/or story telling skills? How? describe.

...

[Show Full Post](#)Nov 18, 2011 | [Reply](#) | [Share](#) | [Tag](#) ▾

TAII/TAIII/TAIV BLOCK 4 - WILLIAMS
PRODUCTION HOURS LOG
LOG IS DUE ON TUESDAY NOV 29

STUDENT: _____

PAGE # _____

Date	Start Time	End Time	Total Time	Description of Duty

HOURS THIS PAGE: _____

Samples of Student Reflection Papers for Advanced Theatre Arts Class

Joanna Cornejo

Block 4

11-28-11

Dead Man Walking

Project: Discourse has been an incredible experience. Before actually starting rehearsals and auditions, I was very intrigued by the play Dead Man Walking, as well as the character of Sister Helen Prejean. This was the first time in which auditions and callbacks came natural to me and I did not struggle with understanding a character. Once I was told that I had gotten the role of Sister Helen, I knew that this play would greatly affect me. However, I never expected how much I would learn through this play.

I remember on our first rehearsal, I was expecting a quick read through and the next day we would begin blocking. However, I really enjoyed this new method at rehearsals. We took our time understanding what we were saying and knowing why we do what we do. We weren't just focused on how the play looks but rather we focused more in the story and how the characters develop. I learned so much as an actor on what it means to tell a story and to send a message out to an audience. It isn't just about entertaining people, but it's about making people see things that go unnoticed. Through this play, I learned how much an actor can impact an audience.

Not only did I learn more about acting, but I also learned a lot about the issue, capital punishment. I am very surprised as to how unjust the system is about capital punishment. Having Ms. Upham for the previous two years, I did have background information on the death penalty, but I was never really passionate about it. After doing projects and getting information from the other classes and in rehearsals, I was really into the cause. It was surprising seeing other people who aren't in theatre be involved and actually be into the death penalty debate. One occasion that surprised me was when we had a debate in my religion class. I was surprised to see how strong people were for the death penalty and also how strong I felt being anti death penalty and arguing back with the statements that they had. Dead Man Walking made me passionate about the death penalty issue. Like In Bryana's monologue, I learned to be a socially active catholic; not just a loving catholic who loves God.

Being the first time that I had a lead role in a production like this, I grew so much as a person. I had had big parts before when I was younger, but I never learned as much as I did through this character. I feel like there is a lot I have in common with Sister Helen. However, one thing that I admire about the character that I definitely lacked was confidence. I have always struggled with that confidence in myself and in my actions. It was through this play that I learned to have confidence and not be afraid if being judged or getting people upset. I learned to see myself differently and know that I have that power to affect people's lives, especially through this play. This production will always hold a special place in my heart. I enjoyed working with everyone and being able to do what I love for about 3 hours straight on stage. I know that not everyone is thrilled about this play because it was a massive job and some people definitely had a lot stress. I also had a lot of stress with homework and college, but for me it was definitely worth it. I loved working with Casey as my partner in crime. I don't think I would have felt as comfortable acting those intense moments with anyone else. It was definitely a really good casting job for me personally, because it was easy for me to have that connection and relationship necessary with all the cast members. If I could go back in time and do it all over again, I would not change a thing.

This has been one of the best memories of my life without a doubt. Thank you for giving me this amazing opportunity!

Matt Dallal

Dead Man Walking

When I first heard what this years play would be I got extremely excited because I felt like this was a play where we could see a lot of people in theater truly access there potential. I felt like we could put on a show that would make people realize that theater is pretty interesting and also make them cry and stuff. But most of all I thought, "here we go matt time to die on stage and make people cry". When auditions had came along and I didn't get the part of matt I was a little bumed but I know Mr. Williams (the only person reading this) and I trusted his decision because I knew that it was for a reason.

When we started read through and blocking I started falling in love with Mr. Delacroix (strictly professionally of course) . The more scenes I read and the more I started seeing how he fit into the play the more I started realizing I wouldn't want any other part in the play. I began to try and get in the mind set of my character and slowly the way my character walked and talked and made awkwardly long eye contact started coming together and really enjoyed playing him on stage. I also enjoyed performing during the forums mostly because making my peers sad makes me strangely happy inside.

I started to notice during this play more so than any other play I've worked on at Mater Dei that I was a senior. I had never really felt the sense of being a leader and knowing what the right thing to do was and people listening to me because they know that I know what the right thing to do was...it was pretty cool. I never really desired to be a leader in anything because no one ever trusted me with something like that and to be able to be a senior that people can trust to know whats up means a lot to me. Im also the only person with facial hair and they respect that to. When the show finally came to a close and we had done what we had set out to do there was an enormous hovering sense of "deep fun" in the air. Every person in the play, or at least the people who have seen the theater program grow, was deeply happy. This play increased my ever-growing love of performing, I don't believe theater is just and outward expression for my need of attention, I believe it is what im made out of, what I want to do, and who I am, and it always will be.

Emma Faulkner
Advanced Theatre
30 November 2011

Dead Man Walking

This play turned out to be more of a success then I thought it would be when first hearing about it. It is definitely one of my most unforgettable high school memories. Dead Man Walking by Tim Robins is made to educate people on the topic of the death penalty, it is made to create discussions about the many deep and true themes of the play. I believe as team full of talented and devoted actors and crew members we did just that. We educated a large high school community about a topic that happens every day but sometimes gets over looked by young people. Before this play the death penalty was there, I didn't really know what when on nor did I have an opinion about it. After reading the play once I was hooked. I couldn't wait to audition

and begin the process. In the beginning I wasn't quite sure what to expect about the whole process. I knew we were diving into a rough and deep subject matter and it would take a lot of maturity and open minds from each person.

I was cast as female guard, and in the beginning this didn't mean much to me. I wasn't sure what was in store for me, but as time went on I realized the importance of my role. Not just specifically my role but everyone who had a smaller role, the people that made up the community. This is a true story based on true people who lived through this experience. They made up the community and showed how one act of hate can affect such a large group of people. That is one of the reason I really developed a passion and seriousness about this process. Of course when we come together as theatre kids are crazy and tend to have fun, but there were times when focus was needed. As female guard I decided to portray a very serious character, who was focused on getting her job done with no messing around. It was very much the way I felt about my role in the play.

If you asked me to move another bench I would probably run away. Well, not really but, as one of the guards my main jobs were to handcuff Matt, open/close cell, and move benches. Sounds simple but it required memorization and cooperation. Being put in a group of 4 boys who didn't like to write down blocking or listen was a challenge but I managed my way through. There were days when I wanted to hit them over the heads with their scripts, but there were also nice moments. We became a little dysfunctional family of guards. When I was first told the guards were going to be in charge of the set changes I was a little worried about all that blocking. After writing it down multiple times and going over it I had it all memorized. I didn't know I could do that, which definitely gave me confidence as an actress. I definitely had some woman power on stage, being in this play as a woman of authority was a big deal because it shows all these overpowering men bringing this nun down. Looking back I wouldn't do a single thing different because all of it was a learning process. I am grateful for this opportunity because I have grown so much and learned a lot about the importance of ensemble and moving set pieces. Action Emma will probably stick with me forever as my alter ego, who fights crime and makes the community a better place. I am truly blessed to have been apart of The Dead Man Walking journey 2011, and yes, I survived.

Sean Hunter
Mr. Williams

Theatre 2
29, November 2011

Dead Man Walking Response

My work in the play Dead Walking was amazing in all aspects of the project. I loved working on the acting and at the same time helping Mr. Williams with setting everything up. Working the forums was also a great thing to do when it came to getting all the students to come, and I believe we were very successful with the forums. Setting up the other things that add to the walkway and even including setting up posters of the play all around the parts of the school to spread the word of this amazing play. My job in the play indeed had a lot to do but it was great working with everybody and knowing everyone was trying their hardest to make Dead Man Walking the best play we've ever been in.

Acting with the actors and setting up truly was a great experience not only for myself but for the rest of the cast and even made more people involved with the play. Working my main part in the

play with synchronizing the argument between Megan and I was amazing, especially in the end where our hard work paid off with the forums and making one of the most intense scenes in the play. When also setting up for our performances, we all pitched in with all the chair placements and setting up the posters and even helping up Mr. Williams set up the curtains was just a fun experience for all of us to just hang out and talk while we work. Acting and setting up the play was such a great experience, it made everything much better with the play and gave us a better perspective of how much this play really means to the rest of us and the rest of the school to support us so much.

Dead Man Walking was such a great experience and I never felt so connected to play this much in my entire two years at Mater Dei. Taking in how the play really is really sets the mood for all the performances and really gave light to how intense this subject was once we understood how important it was. It was like being a real lawyer competing to win for my job in my role. Giving the play life really made this play the best experience I've ever had this year.

Jackie Janowicz

Any time I am acting, I am having a great time. So, obviously I had a great time doing Dead Man Walking.. But, even if I didn't have that general attitude about acting, I would still have enjoyed my time working on Dead Man Walking. The thing that sets this play apart from others is not only the theme, but its ability to be thought provoking and reach out to practically everyone in the audience. A discussion of the validity of capital punishment is more relevant now then ever before and it was great to be able to bring this discussion to our entire school. I felt really honored to be a part of this production. It was gratifying to have people I didn't even know stop me on campus and comment or compliment the play or my performance. All of my friends and family members that came to see the play were so impressed by the caliber of the acting and the creative vision and freely told me so. During the forums that we presented to the English classes I was so surprised yet pleased that the student audiences were so attentive to what was going on, on the stage.

Working with this cast was also very rewarding. It seems we had a really mature and dedicated cast with this production for the most part. Everybody understood the gravity of the subject matter we were dealing with and gave it proper respect. Almost everybody memorized their lines in a timely fashion and did a really good job portraying their characters. And, as a cast we grew close. The actors and myself that were portraying the Poncelet family actually began to feel somewhat like a family. We would see each other on campus and call each other by our character's names. As for me, I was everybody's "mom". I guess I really got into the character because I started responding back whenever anybody would call me Lucille, even if it wasn't during rehearsals. But, I think the cast as a whole developed a good camaraderie.

As for my role as Lucille, I relished the chance to take on a serious part. I was somewhat anxious, however, because I perceived it might be a difficult role to play. The challenge was to make the "mother" of a killer a sympathetic, relatable character. I think, most people in today's society would still initially think the character of Lucille might be some type of low class, heartless, immoral individual. I saw my challenge as bringing her to life as the loving, caring mother that she was. I needed the audience to see that she wasn't the "Ma Barker" she referred to in the play. And, as for the result of my efforts, I think I rose to the occasion. I think I was

successful in what I hoped to communicate to the audience about the Lucille. I felt I was able to maintain the continuity of her character throughout the entire play. Of course, I wished I could have managed real tears for those specific scenes where it would have been appropriate, but try as I might, I was unable. I guess that is one skill I still need to acquire.

Overall though, I feel playing Lucille was a wonderful growth experience for me as an actor. It allowed me to explore another side of my acting abilities and stretch my repertoire a bit. And, exploring the whole subject matter of capital punishment and bringing it to life on stage was a very enlightening experience. Though I was already anti death penalty, being a part of this play deepened my conviction and gave me a better understanding of the human dynamics surrounding the issue of capital punishment.

Alexa Vellanoweth
Dead Man Walking

This whole experience has been a really heavy and big play and I've noticed that this is one of the few plays that we've put on here at Mater Dei that is bigger than ourselves. It was more than a Project Discourse production, or even a thesis for Mr. Williams's master program. It was a play that really brought the controversial topic of the death penalty to Mater Dei students and faculty and everyone was involved. This play involved all of the departments like never before and I felt everyone was a supporter for this production. All of the Mater Dei community were excited and intrigued by this topic more than the majority of our plays we've performed previously.

I tried to keep an open mind throughout the whole process of the play and I really made myself apart of this show with an open heart. Yes, I had my opinions walking in but I decided that it wasn't fair to the cast, the play, or me to keep my judgement on the death penalty and not listen. However, by the end of this play, my view didn't change. I still am pro-death penalty and this experience opened my eyes to the other viewpoint of the topic but it didn't persuade me enough to change my viewpoint. I felt like a lot of people changed their opinion concerning the death penalty once the production ended and I thought I was the only one who's opinion didn't change. But I also realized something else when performing this play. Children's minds are tainted with their parents views on social topics since they've lived with them their whole life. And I realized that people who come into these situations as a child or young adult take the views of their parents because that's all they've been taught. But, sometimes they form their own opinion once they learn more about the topic and are surrounded by it and sometimes they don't. I thought this experience didn't try to persuade us a certain way but I thought it was a good way to allow young adults to learn about the death penalty and form their own opinion, whether it is similar to their parents or not. Overall, I thought the play was a success. There were some rough patches but overall I thought it went pretty well. Some negatives I felt about the play was the cast size and attitude. I think the play could've been a lot stronger without that amount of people. The reason why I feel this way probably is because of the effort they put in. I felt the cast members who didn't necessarily have a speaking role or a pivotal character in the play lacked ambition in their acting. It's nice to have the background scenes but they didn't live in the moment. I always felt the idea of the allusion of the first time was completely forgotten and the cast members didn't step up. The whole mood of the play would've been a lot more intimate and powerful if the cast was smaller. Another negative was the momentum. I felt the scenes were either rushed or slowed

down. There are those filler scenes in plays and that is understandable but every scene is important to set the story up. The overall transitions for the scenes were pretty poor but you also have to take in the account of the way the play was written. Tim Robbins definitely didn't make that job easy through his writing and that was a challenge that was difficult to manage. However, if we handled that difficulty properly, the play could've been a lot stronger and powerful.

Some positives about the play was the set. The set design truly had a message and that was shown throughout the whole play. You could tell there was a purpose for the lack of furniture and neutral setting. To me, it made you want to ask if the furniture symbolized anything or why it was chosen like that. I also thought the set design really helped the transition of the scenes and the different locations for those scenes. It was a very strong and meaningful part of the play that set the overall atmosphere for the whole show. Another positive was the blocking. That was another factor that helped the transitions for the different scenes and locations. I felt the blocking contained symbolism too, especially during the court room scene and execution scene. The blocking was really thought out and you could tell. It worked and it helped with the scenes and dialogue.

Overall, it was a great show that brought awareness to the death penalty. It was a powerful and interesting experience that not only touched the cast and crew but the audience who saw it

Williams, Patrick

From: Williams, Patrick
Sent: Friday, November 11, 2011 2:16 PM
To: Milby, Gail; Plunkett, Tom; Melvin, Scott
Subject: Display awards & pics
Perf Arts Dept,


So it has finally happened . . . we have turned the north hallway of Monarch Pavilion into a Performing Arts Hallway. Yeah!

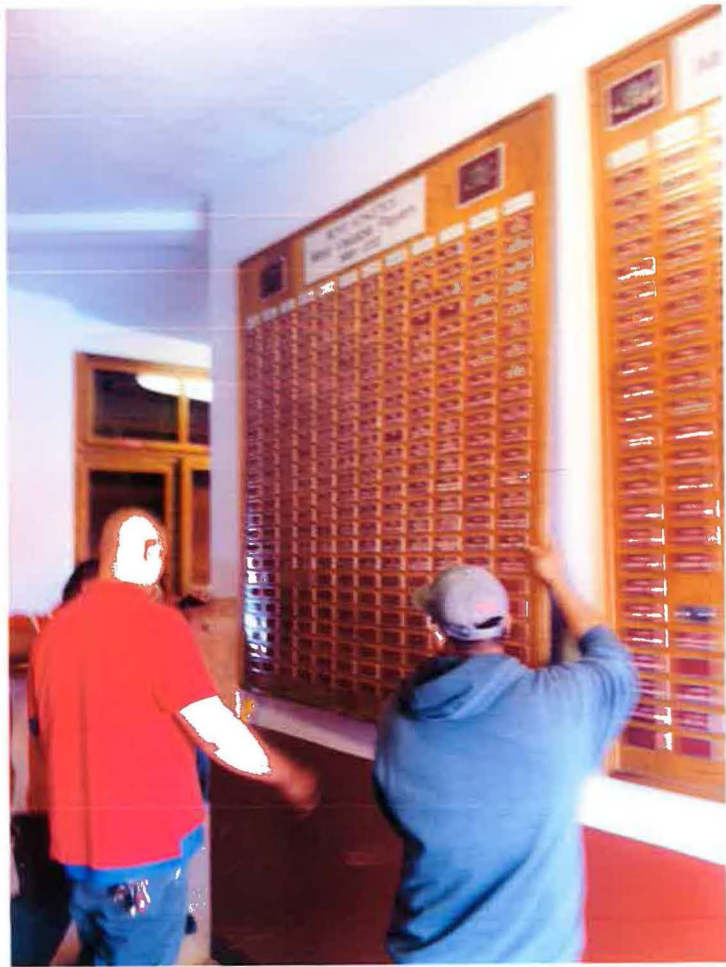
I have designated spaces in the cases for your program. Please fill it with awards and pictures/posters of your program.

The big blank wall will soon (December) have framed photos of all Perf Arts programs. Until then, I'll have a banner for the play on it.

Thanks,

Mr. Patrick Williams
Director of Performing Arts
Mater Dei High School







Dressing Rooms

Modify the Girls & Boys Bathrooms to function as dressing rooms.

Remove all plumbing except for sinks.

Keep the stalls, remove toilets. These stalls will provide a place to change clothes.

Both rooms will need track lighting and full length mirrors.

Change locks so that these new dressing rooms can store costumes on performance weeks, needs very limited access.

The current boys bathroom room could be expanded by tearing down a wall and closing off the chair storage (pic above).

If expanded this will become the girls dressing room.

The current girls bathroom will become the boys dressing room.

Last year we turned the back storage "XX Key" room into a storage room for Christmas Corner and Madrigal Feast Costumes. We need three strong pipes installed to hang the costumes on. This could be done anytime soon. It will free up the rolling racks we've been using for the many costumes.



Walls & Windows

Remove all Hoops, Score Boards & Banners

Open up the windows and install an easy way to open & close windows.

In the evening hours, opening the windows will let heat out

To provide a more theatrical environment, we need to change the color of the walls to be dark. This could mean black, dark gray, dark maroon, etc.

To help with acoustics we need the walls to have sound proofing. This can be accomplished by installing sound pads (like in MAC), hanging drapes around the space, or covering the walls with carpeting. The picture above is from a movie theatre. The carpeted wall helps absorb the random sound. This will probably be the least expensive way to transform the walls and control acoustics. When the walls absorb random noise, then the audience will be able to focus on the amplified sound.

On the south wall, we should install a large mirror/mylar for the dancers to use. Ideally, this should also have a bar for ballet & stretching. We will need a drape installed that can cover it during events.





CEILING & ROOF

The most important thing is to repair the roof. Recently large ceiling pieces fell onto students during a dance rehearsal. The outside of the roof needs to be repaired. The large blower vent fan is very loud, needs repair and oil.

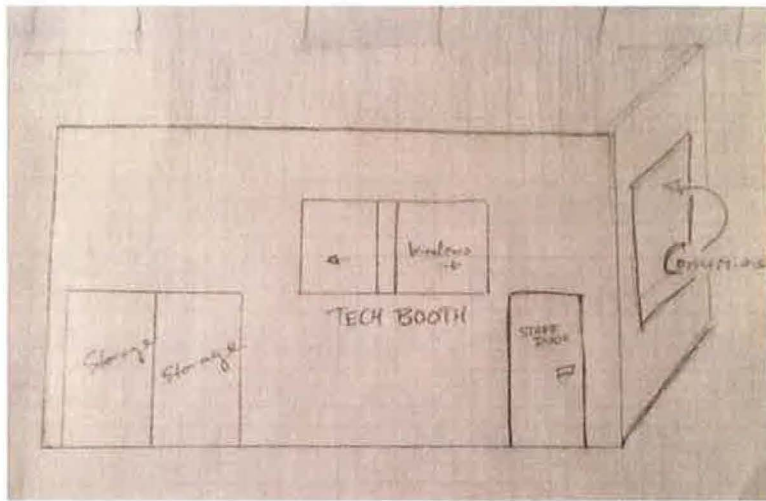
The ceiling has many non-operational items hanging. These need to be removed. This includes old speakers, cigarette smoke filters and broken heaters.

We need to keep the four white corner heaters, since they still work

Lets keep the bars that held up the hoops so that we can hang lights, etc from them.

Purchase and hang trusses so that any light & sound plot can happen.

Paint ceiling & pipes to be Black, this will help with light spill and bounce (important)



Bleachers & Dry Wall on West End

Remove Bleachers

In Bleachers area, build a wall to create:

Concession Booth

Tech Booth

Bingo Chair Storage

Port-a-Cool storage

Movable Seating Theatrical Chair Cart Storage

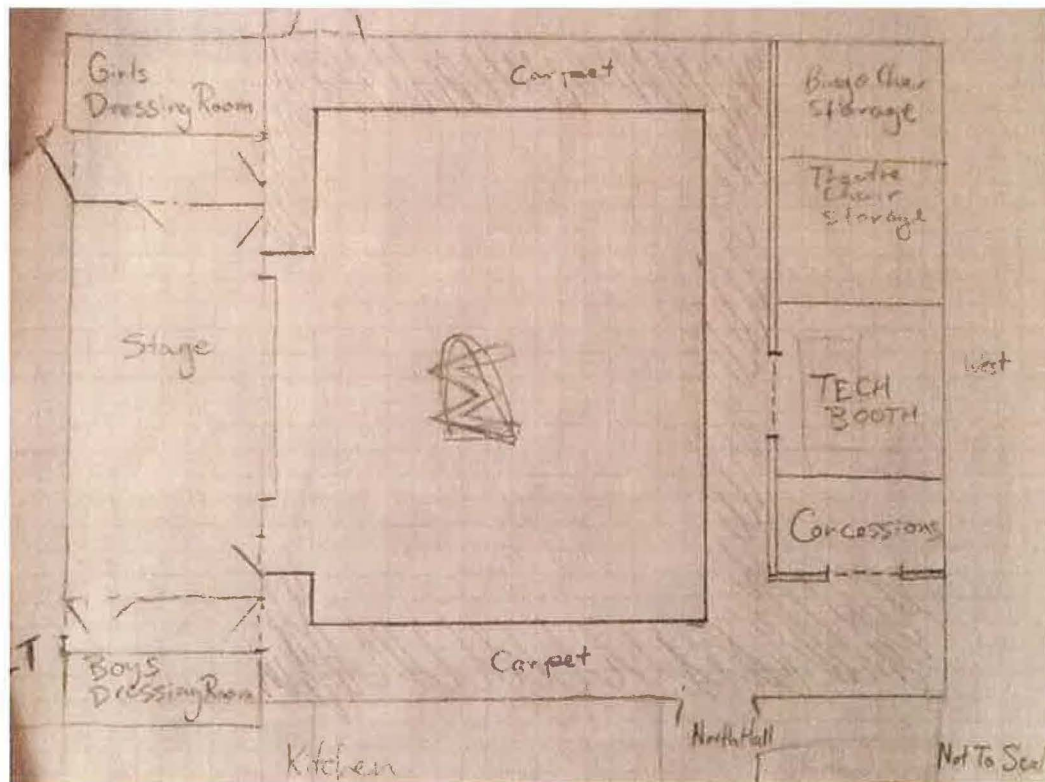
We will need to build a wooden platform for the tech booth area. It needs to be elevated and be able to seat 4 technicians and their equipment. The dry wall area will need a cut out to see the stage. Ideally, it would have two cut outs with slide windows.



Floor Area

Carpet the outside area around the court. This will help with acoustics and muffle the noise made by actors & audience during shows.

Court Area - keep the wooden floor because it is sprung which is good for dancers. However, re-stain to be a dark brown. Perhaps keep the MD center court design, but get rid of any basketball/volleyball lines. By keeping the wood floor at court size it allows for dance/song/cheer/guard to still choreograph and rehearse.





Stage Area

We can no longer store the bingo chairs under the stage. If we are set up for an event, everything needs to move in order to get these chairs in & out. Instead, create a bingo chair storage behind the new dry wall area so that it is non-intrusive.

Under the stage, staple carpet padding so that we remove the hallow thud sound. This is very important for plays and dance recitals. This simple solution is something most schools have done to solve this problem.

Install two trusses above the stage to provide better placement of lights on shows.

Keep the wooden cross above the stage, but the Alma Mater words?

The area around the stage proscenium needs to be dark. This helps for blackouts. The problem with Godinez High School stage is the walls are white around their stage which makes the blackouts difficult and distracts the eye from the stage.

The red drape for the stage needs repair and cleaning. Hopefully, this can be done during Spring Semester.

There are collapsable theatre seating units that I call chair carts. They are used in black box theatres to provide elevated seating in various configuration. When not being used they can roll into the dry wall storage area.





Speakers & Electricity

The Electricity in the Monarch Pavilion is very sketchy. Sometimes power goes out during performances. We can't plug coffee nor popcorn machines without causing breakers to flip.

We need to find a way to get more electricity to the stage area, ceiling, tech booth and concession stand.

There are several large speakers on the ceiling, however some don't work. We need to have Larry Sharp evaluate which can be used. The ones that don't work need to be removed and possible replaced.

Ideally, we should invest in lighting cables and some lighting instruments that can "live" in the Monarch Pavilion. We waste money renting instruments for events.

Timeline

Spring Semester:

Fix Vents & Roof

Clean Curtains

Install pipes in back costume storage

Price chair carts

Price Tech Equipment for booth and hanging (lights & sound)

Reorganize summer camps schedules & venues

Meet with all parties and choose colours, materials, etc.

Visit other local venues for research

Research and order materials for the summer renovation

Summer Session:

The big transformation.

Top Priorities: the electricity, remove basketball items, hang/attach wall treatments, dry walled area and dressing rooms

Try to complete most of proposal before August

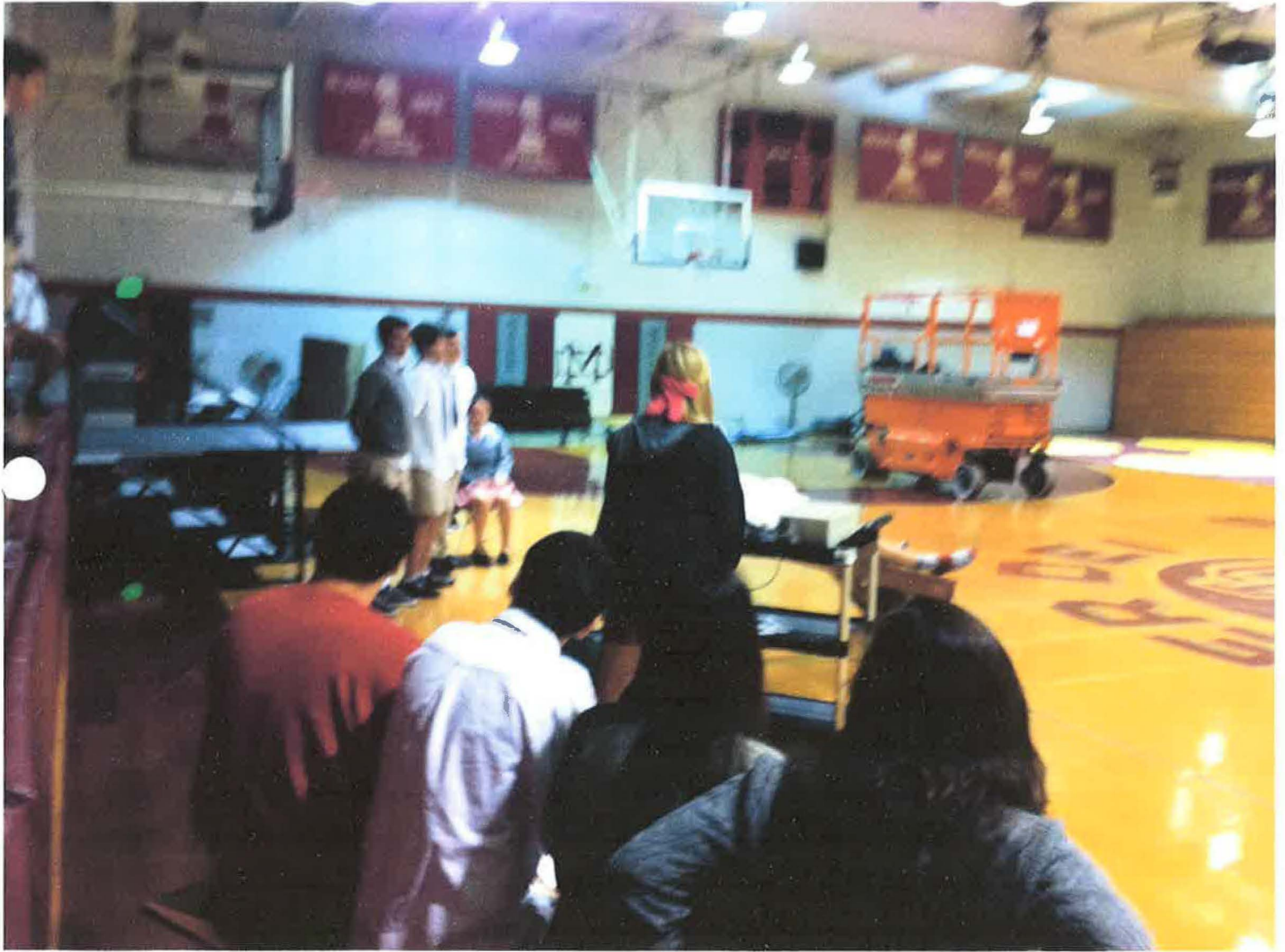
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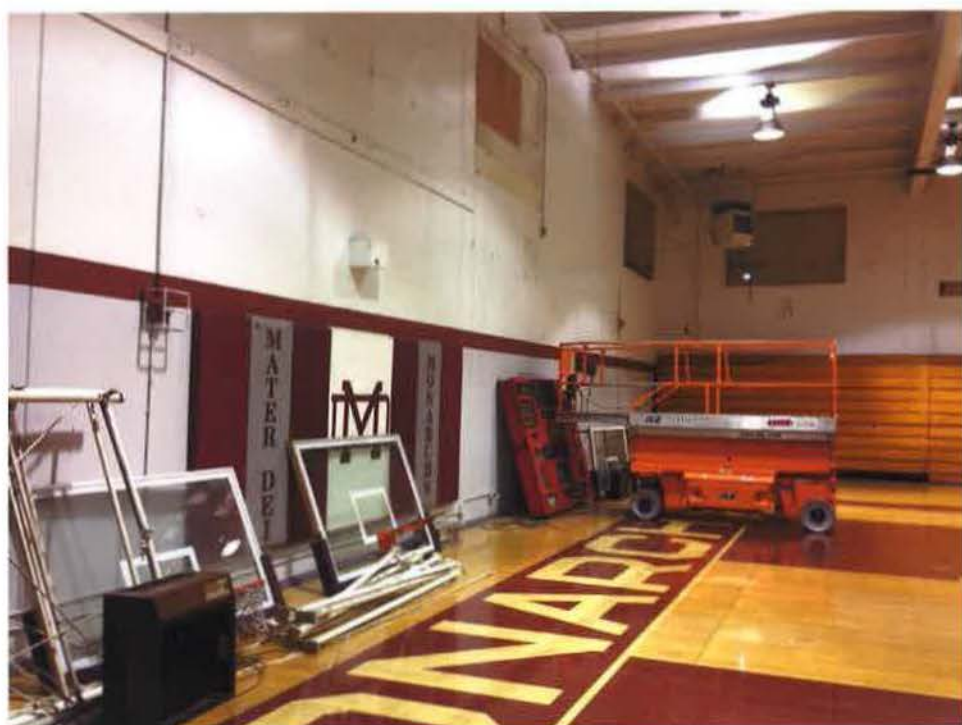


























Mane Message

Some things you may not know about Mater Dei High School...

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Monarch Pavilion Transformation in Progress

Posted on June 20, 2012 by mdhsperformarts



In an effort to celebrate the bounty of talent in the MD Performing Arts Department, we are giving the Monarch Pavilion a new look. Many events from Dance Recitals to touring groups perform in the "old gym" through out the year. Our Dance classes, Color Guard practices and Theatre productions have performed in the "old gym" since the opening of our Muerello Athletic Center. The site of the future Performing Arts Center has been serving as one for a few years now.

During the past couple years, the north hallway has been changed into a Performing Arts Hall and the Girls locker room was transformed into the Little Theatre black-box. Last summer, we renovated some locker room areas to become storage areas and serve as passage ways for stage entrances. This fall, our students will get to perform in a venue that is even more suited for performances.

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Posted on June 20, 2012 by mdhsperformarts



In an effort to celebrate the bounty of talent in the MD Performing Arts Department, we are giving the Monarch Pavilion a new look. Many events from Dance Recitals to touring groups perform in the “old gym” through out the year. Our Dance classes, Color Guard practices and Theatre productions have performed in the “old gym” since the opening of our Muerello Athletic Center. The site of the future Performing Arts Center has been serving as one for a few years now.

During the past couple years, the north hallway has been changed into a Performing Arts Hall and the Girls locker room was transformed into the Little Theatre black-box. Last summer, we renovated some locker room areas to become storage areas and serve as passage ways for stage entrances. This fall, our students will get to perform in a venue that is even more suited for performances.



Monarch Pavilion today

Although the transformation has only just begun, the space has already changed dramatically (pun intended!). The basketball hoops and other hanging items have been removed from the ceiling. Our incredible Facilities crew, under the leadership of Steve Ritter and Luis Banda, are currently building new storage areas and a Tech Booth. The Monarch Pavilion walls and ceiling have been painted dark colors to better serve theatrical performances. The court floor will remain. During the summer, we will also install mirrors for dance rehearsals as well as modify two areas backstage into dressing rooms. We invite you to drop in after the transformation is complete in late August.

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